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EDEN AND HEAVEN



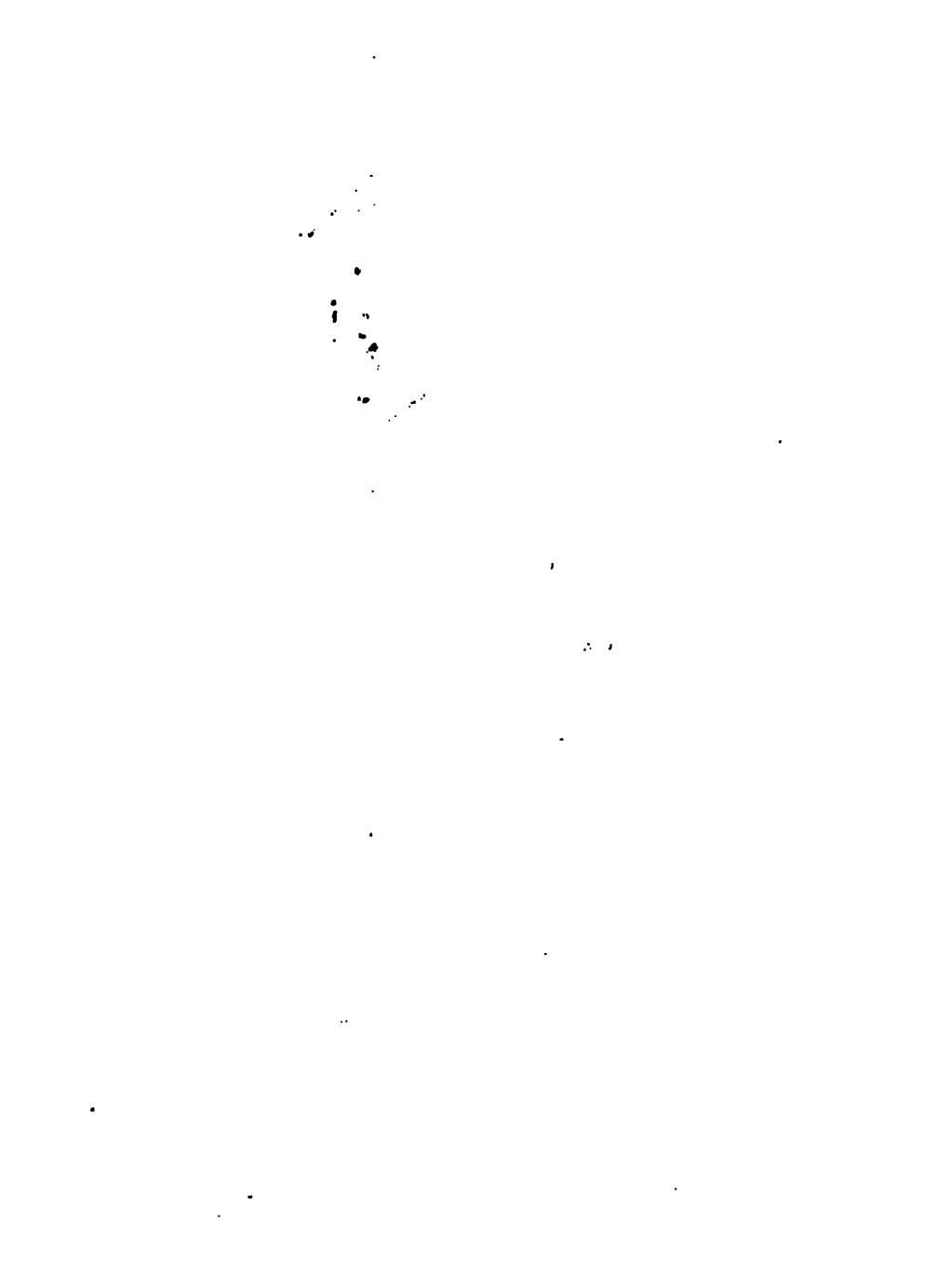
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EDEN AND HEAVEN.



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BY

M. L. CHARLESWORTH

AUTHOR OF 'WHERE DWELLEST THOU,' 'MINISTERING CHILDREN,'
ETC. ETC.



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PREFACE.

AMONGST those whose hearts are awakened by the quickening power of Divine Truth, there are many inquiring doubtfully on the great questions of Sin and Holiness, and on the great questions inseparably connected with them, namely, Atonement and Righteousness before God.

Young hearts are perplexed by doubts as to what constitutes a thing lawful or unlawful. Older hearts desire to cast away the fetters of worldly thought and habit, and to walk at liberty in the way of God's commandments; they fear to come short, yet fear hardly less an over-strictness in the eyes of others. They realise that the question of Holiness of heart and life is a question that includes pursuits, amusements, social intercourse, — everything that makes up life. Yet they are not able clearly to trace how to refuse the evil and choose the good, because they do not clearly see the mind and will of God revealed in

our Lord Jesus Christ, and are therefore not able to take their stand in the Atonement, and the Righteousness which is of God by faith.

Such appear to long for the Divine Law to be uttered as of old, in the exactness of 'The Letter;' not breathed in the Life-giving Grace and Love of the Word by 'The Spirit of Truth.' But God writes not the Law for His children on tables of stone, with the mandate affixed to each act, 'Thou shalt,' or 'Thou shalt not.' He reveals His mind and will, His very heart to them, in Jesus Christ. 'All things that the Father hath are Mine; therefore said I that He (the Spirit of Truth) shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you.' (John, xvi. 13-15.) 'He will guide you into all truth.' Again, Jesus said, 'The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are Life.' Through the Word of God, applied by the Spirit of Truth, 'the Lord and Giver of Life,' the soul is restored—converted to God, the eyes enlightened, and the whole man governed.

This Book is written as a TESTIMONY to the 'Truth as it is revealed in Jesus Christ,' opened to man in Eden, and perfected in Heaven.

EDEN AND HEAVEN.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

‘WHO CAN BRING A CLEAN THING OUT OF AN UNCLEAN?
NOT ONE!’—JOB, XIV. 4.

BEFORE entering on Scenes in Eden, we would face the Question that lies at the door of every Conscience, What is Sin? Holy Scripture contains a plain, direct, and complete reply; with a full revelation of the way of entire deliverance from it. Nowhere else can any answer be found, nor any remedy provided, on which the soul can rest with unshaken confidence. That which speaks with uncertainty, from a finite and limited view, can never bring assurance. It must be the Testimony of an Infinite Mind, taking in the Whole—the Beginning and the Ending—on which alone the soul can rest. ‘God is Light, and in Him is no Darkness at all.’ (1 John, i. 5.) If we are willing, in His Light to see Light (Ps. xxxvi. 9), the most

repulsive subject, and the darkest shadow, will open out into the brightness of Eternal Truth.

There is in our nature this evil called Sin. It is silently confessed when Conscience wakes and warns the soul, and publicly confessed in the public worship of God. Are we satisfied with this occasional sense and public confession of Sin, without any inquiry into its nature and consequences? Have we asked with the earnestness of those who feel the question of the utmost importance, What is this Sin that dwelleth in me? and how can it be put away?

This question, of infinite importance to every one, is treated by many as though the less it were thought upon the better; as though to forget it would lessen responsibility on account of it. Sin dwells in the heart, and flows on in the life unquestioned; its right never disputed; until the soul and its sin depart together. Both together are hidden from earthly view; it is taken for granted that all is well with the departed; the question whether the Sin that was in it here has followed it to the World of spirits, is not considered; no disquietude is felt by those who are left; no solicitude because of their own sinful nature; they seem to expect that in some unknown way, before they quit this mortal life, the Sin that they own to will be separated from them, though now they seek no deliverance from its presence and its consequences.

Others appear to feel that by fulfilling every

duty in earthly relationship, by acting from right motives and principles, they do all that they can ; and that any Sin of nature must be left to a merciful God to forgive. But the question returns in its searching inquiry, 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ? Not one !' If the very nature we inherit be unclean by reason of the Sin that dwelleth in it, unclean in the sight of that God who is 'of purer eyes than to behold evil' (Hab. i. 13), then every duty it fulfils, every motive that guides and every principle that governs it, is shut out for ever from the divine acceptance or recognition ; because the nature itself is sinful and Sin is the one only thing in all the Universe that God accounts 'an evil thing.' 'Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord.' (Jer. ii. 19.) Job, as a man, the most perfect and upright, was given up to the trial of adversity under the teaching of God in the Light of the Divine Presence, until he saw and felt the indwelling Sin of his nature, and was brought to the heartfelt confession, 'I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' (Job, ii. xlii.) Sin is that evil, wherever it is found and in whatever degree, on which the wrath of God must eternally fasten, God continuing Holy and Sin remaining Sinful, 'For our God is a consuming Fire.' (Heb. xii. 29.)

But another fact stands face to face with this evil fact of Sin in our nature ; a blessed and glorious

fact; in which a state, present and eternal, is offered to man, infinitely more blessed than he knew before Sin entered; a state in which man is called to stand no longer in himself, but to seek and find in another, even in the only Begotten Son of God, infinitely more than he lost by Sin. This glorious fact is proclaimed and acknowledged in the public worship of God, but how many there are who leave it to this general acknowledgment and distant view! The Angels desire to look into these things (1 Pet. i. 12), though He took not on Him the nature of Angels; though the Angels who kept not their first estate are reserved in everlasting chains, under Darkness, to the Judgment of the Last Day (Jude, 6); but man, whose Brother, partaker of whose flesh and blood the Christ became, that man might be changed into the divine image, and called to Eternal Glory by Christ Jesus; man, sinful, and redeemed by the precious Blood of the Lord Jesus, looks coldly from a distance on this blessed Hope, expecting that in some way, before, or at the end of all things here, this almost unknown Sin will be met by this almost unknown remedy, and that then all will be well.

Is it wise to keep these all-important questions at a distance, unsettled and almost unknown, seeing that in the answer to them lies everlasting happiness, or everlasting woe? Must not the day come, we know not how soon, when the distant will draw near? It may be suddenly, when least ex-

pected. 'Be ye therefore ready,' is the divine warning, 'for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not.' (Luke, xii. 40.) 'If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.' (Rev. iii. 3.) Why should we not bring these questions home to our hearts now, and find, at once and for ever in our own experience, the blessed reality that Divine Truth always unfolds to the humble inquirer at her gates? 'Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth Me, findeth Life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate Me love Death.' (Prov. viii.)

There are those who have thought on these things, and found the knowledge of the blessed remedy provided by God for deliverance from the condemnation of sin, and yet they cannot assure their hearts before Him. (1 John, iii. 19.) 'He that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth.' (John, xii. 35.) 'If we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another (with God ?), and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' (1 John, i. 7.) And Jesus said, 'I am the Light of the World, he that followeth Me shall not walk in Darkness, but shall have the Light of Life.' (John, viii. 12.) Yet the Gospel comes not to them in much assurance. (1 Thess. i. 12.) Probably the most frequent cause of a continuance

in this uncertain state is the partial knowledge of what Sin is. They look at Sin in its repeated acts, not in its nature as it abides in the soul. They weigh the measure of their Sin against the measure of God's mercy; they question whether their oft-returning sins will outlast the endurance of God's mercy. Could they but once see the real nature of Sin, they would give up all hope in themselves, they would by Faith go utterly out of themselves, into Christ, taking their stand before God only and entirely in JESUS, whom God hath set forth to be the Propitiation for our Sins. (Rom. iv. 25; 1 John, iv. 10.) They would learn to say, 'In the Lord have I Righteousness and strength' (Isa. xlv. 24), and with humble Hope and joyful Faith to know that they are 'complete in Him,' 'in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' (Col. ii. 9, 10.) For who shall assault the soul which has fled for refuge to the Hope that God hath set before it? Those Glad Tidings of Good freely given and freely accepted must bring everlasting Consolation and Good Hope through Grace. (2 Thess. ii. 16.)

Others accept the Hope set before them, they believe all the revelation of Divine Truth as it is in Jesus (Eph. iv. 21); but they hold it coldly. They own that it does not burn in their hearts, nor brighten on their minds, nor glow on their lips; and they sometimes fear that its Light does not shine in them; they confess this and mourn it, but are cold still. May not the cause of this coldness of heart

unto God be an imperfect knowledge of what Sin is? Did not our Lord teach us the cause of all lack of love in our hearts towards Him?—‘Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay He frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love Him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom He forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.’ (Luke, vii. 36–50.) So long as we feel our debt of Sin to be with the debtor who owed fifty pence, our love can never glow; but one sight of what Sin really is,—the overwhelming fact of what its nature or existence in us is, must lead to that deep plunge into the love of God in Jesus Christ, which fills the soul with ‘all joy and peace in believing.’ (Rom. xv. 13.)

Our real knowledge of one step in the Divine Life of Faith, and Hope, and Love—or, in other words—of Repentance towards God and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, must lead to our real knowledge of every other step; for it is the Word of the Lord Himself, ‘Whosoever hath to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.’ (Luke, viii. 18.)

Man had the knowledge of good in Eden. Eating of the Tree of which God had said, ‘Thou shalt not

eat of it,' brought him the knowledge of Evil; and now he can never rise a single step to God, and Holiness, and the Love which is of God, until he knows his own self-chosen place in Sin. The Light that shining on him shows him his Death in trespasses and sins, is the first ray of the Light of Life in Christ Jesus. 'When He' (the Spirit of Truth) 'is come, He will reprove the world of sin . . . of sin, because they believe not on Me.' (John, xvi. 9.)

CHAPTER II.

THE QUESTION.

‘IF ONE SIN AGAINST ANOTHER, THE JUDGE SHALL JUDGE HIM; BUT IF A MAN SIN AGAINST THE LORD, WHO SHALL ENTREAT FOR HIM?’—1 SAM. II. 25.

To whom can we look for a certain answer to the inquiry, What is Sin? Surely to God alone. God made man without Sin. He knew what man was while as yet man had no Sin; He saw Sin enter, saw it leave the stain of guilt on those whom He had made innocent, saw it spread the poison of Death in man whom he had made a living soul. He who would know what Sin is must ask that solemn question of God. One thing we know,—that we are sick unto Death because of this poison of Sin; but what that poison is, how it entered, how it works, and how it may be cast out, God alone can tell us. One thing is certain, for God has declared it,—There is a way by which ‘being made free from Sin, we may have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.’ (Rom. vi. 22.)

Some may ask, Why do I need to know what the nature of Sin is? If I confess that I am a Sinner, if I try to avoid Sin, and ask pardon for

all in which I fail, is not that enough? Why do I need to learn what Sin is? But would even an earthly parent be satisfied with a son who should ask pardon continually, without ever caring to learn the nature of his offence? How could that son hope to avoid the evil, if he did not even know what the evil was? If, when his parent had taken the greatest pains and care, by illustration and by precept, by warning and reproof, by penalties and rewards, to teach him the exact nature of the evil he was to avoid, the son gave no heed to learn, cared not to inquire, but held it quite enough in a general way to ask pardon, taking it for granted that some things were sure to be displeasing to his parent, but that a general confession and a general pardon would leave all straight between them,—would such be a son that a parent could delight in, a son for the father's house and the father's heart? If we desire to claim divine relationship to the High and Lofty One, to know God over all blessed for evermore as our Father, will He not say, 'If I be a Father, where is mine honour?' (Mal. i. 6.)

We must also understand that God never gave, and never will give to any, Pardon only. He has ONE GIFT, in which all other gifts are treasured up: that One Gift is His Beloved Son. 'Whom God hath set forth, to be a Propitiation through Faith in His Blood, to declare His Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, through

the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time His Righteousness, that He might be Just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' (Rom. iii. 25, 26.) 'He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?' (Rom. viii. 32.)

God in His Holiness, instead of casting away man in his Sin, holds back His wrath, opens a way of deliverance from the Sin, and by all that can best enlighten the mind and influence the heart reveals to man the evil nature of the Sin that is in him, that he may be led to flee for Refuge to the Hope set before him. 'Therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you; and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you.' (Isa. xxx. 18.)

It has been said that Doctrines are the pillars of instruction, and Illustrations the Windows that let in the Light. God in His infinite mercy instructs us by both. Holy Scripture is a Treasury of Illustrations. Facts in the history of man, records of man in which we see Sin and Holiness in their true nature, in their workings, in their effects; while holy Precepts and blessed Promises constantly plead with the soul to refuse the evil and choose the good. But we must beware that we do not allow ourselves to think of Facts as real things, and of Doctrines as unreal. A man's opinions may be very unreal, mere notions floating vaguely and vainly through the mind, but Faith is never an

unreal thing. It has at all times and in all persons a blessed or a terrible reality, shaping the destiny of the soul that holds it, according to its own nature, true or false, heavenly or earthly. Even the Faith of Devils is a tremendous reality: they 'believe and tremble.' (James, ii. 19.)

St. Paul and St. James alike teach us by the Spirit of God that Doctrines are nothing until they become Facts to the Soul. Faith is nothing unless it be the SUBSTANCE of things hoped for (Heb. xi. 1); that is, unless it accepts and appropriates the object set before it by God, and so becomes a fact. 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the Faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.' This describes the great Fact, the greatest reality of Life to the Apostle. (Gal. ii. 20.) In the same way, St. James teaches that Faith is nothing without works, then it proves itself a reality, a Fact. (James, ii. 17.) In the same truth our Lord, when asked by the Jews, What shall we do that we might Work the Works of God? made answer, 'This is the Work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent.' (John, vi. 28, 29.) 'Faith which Worketh by Love.' (Gal. v. 5.) Hope, in the same way, is spoken of as a Fact: 'Which Hope we have as an Anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil' (Heb. vi. 19); 'For the Hope which is laid up for you in Heaven' (Col. i. 5); 'Christ in you, the Hope of Glory.' (Col.

i. 27.) Let us ever remember that in all that relates to God and Eternal Truth, we have to do with Personal Facts. The sum and substance of all divine Truth, all Truth of the Natural or of the Spiritual World, all Truth as it relates to God or to His Creation, is presented to Us in the Person of the God-man, Christ Jesus, when He says 'I am the Truth;' and the Spirit of God testifies, that in Christ are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. (Col. ii. 3.)

In the inquiry, What is sin? we deal with a great and solemn Fact, on which God vouchsafes to answer our inquiry. 'Whosoever committeth Sin transgresseth also the Law, for Sin is the transgression of the Law.' (1 John, iii. 4.) Of what Law? Not of any Law of Man. Men can make Laws to protect the persons and property of their fellow-men, but they cannot make a Law against Sin, as Sin, for they themselves are Sinners, they must let that alone for ever. Sin is the transgression of a Commandment that is holy, just, and good. (Rom. vii. 12.) It is the Law of Him who made us; the Law of Him who knows whereof we are made, and who is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do. (Heb. iv. 12, 13.)

What is the holy Law or Commandment, the transgression of which is Sin? He best can tell us

what it is, who came that He might fulfil that Law; and that He might bear our Sins, that is, our transgression of it, in His own Body on the Tree. 'Master, which is the Great Commandment in the Law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and Great Commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.' (Matt. xxii. 36-40.)

This was the Law of Man's being, the Law written out in his heart and life, which Law he transgressed in Eden, and became a Sinner. It was the Law repeated again and again, in direct Command, by Moses the Lawgiver to the Chosen People of God: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.' (Deut. vi. 4-9; x. 12, 13; xxx. 6.) 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. I am the Lord.' (Deut. xix. 2-18.) But it waited for the Second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, the Man Christ Jesus, to show that love in living power, written in His Divine Life and atoning Death, and so borne in upon the Soul of Man with a new and resistless force. 'The Love of Christ constraineth us.' (2 Cor. v. 14.) 'Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law.' (Rom. xiii. 10).

Until 'God was manifest in the flesh' (1 Tim. iii. 16), the heart of man could not conceive such love. 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' (John, xv. 13.) 'But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.' (Rom. v. 3.) Therefore Jesus said, 'A new Commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' (John, xiii. 34.)

And St. John says, 'Brethren, I write no New Commandment unto you, but an Old Commandment, which ye had from the Beginning. The Old Commandment is the Word which ye heard from the Beginning. Again a New Commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the Darkness is past and the true Light now shineth.' (1 John, ii. 7-11.) 'We have known and believed the Love that God hath to us. God is Love; and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him.' (1 John, iv. 16.)

Whoever steps out of this Love, this perfect Love to God and Man, is a transgressor of the Commandment that is holy, just, and good; he takes that step out of God, for God is Love, and to dwell in God is to inhabit or dwell in Love. Be it in thought, or feeling, or word, or act, if it errs from, departs out of this perfect Love, it errs from God, it departs out of Him, and this is Sin. When the Spirit of God

reveals to us this perfect Law, and shows us how in everything we come short of the obedience God requireth, He convinces us of Sin. When the Holy Spirit 'takes of the things that are Christ's, and shows them unto us' (John, xvi. 14), then we see the Perfect Law written out in the Perfect Man Christ Jesus. We see the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And by the Light of the Spirit of Truth, Who is the Comforter, we see that Christ hath made an end of Sin and brought in Everlasting Righteousness (Dan. ix. 24). 'That God might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' (Rom. iii. 26.) Led by the Spirit of God, We see that Christ is the Rock; His Work is Perfect (Deut. xxxii. 4); and that taking refuge in Christ, our imperfection is 'complete in Him' (Col. ii. 10), while our transgressions are put away, our sins blotted out by the Blood of His Cross; for the Lord 'hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all, and by His stripes we are healed.' (Isa. liii.) 'Who His own self bare our sins in His own Body on the Tree, that we being dead to Sins should live unto Righteousness.' (1 Pet. ii. 24.) 'But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off are brought nigh by the Blood of Christ.' (Eph. ii. 13.) God by the Law reveals to man the exceeding sinfulness of Sin (Rom. vii. 13); and yet 'God so loved the World, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.' (John, iii. 16.)

CHAPTER III.

THE GARDEN.

‘THE GARDEN OF GOD.’—EZEK. XXXI. 9.

How beautiful is many a Garden planted by art and man’s device! What then must have been the perfection when God planted a Garden! ‘And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; and a river went out of Eden to water the Garden.’ ‘And there He put the man whom He had formed.’ In the Trees of God, in the flowing river, in each Herb and Flower, in animated nature, vocal in melody, and endlessly varied in form and colour, man saw the Perfection of Him who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. (Isa. xxviii. 29.)

God gave to man Wisdom to understand the nature of the objects around him, an intelligent enjoyment of all things, an instinctive knowledge of things as they were; the Light of Truth, which has no false colours, no deceiving shows. ‘The Lord God brought unto Adam every beast of the Garden, and every Fowl of the air, and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name

thereof.' Adam saw all things in the Light of the Lord, there was nothing to darken, nothing to hinder that Light, his knowledge flowed from the Most High, his words spoke of things as they are before God, therefore they could not be reversed.

To man was given by God the Companionship that most suited his nature, an help meet for him. His life possessed 'the joys that flow from hearts assured and mutual love;' while the voice of the Lord God held familiar converse with him. There was no want for body, soul, or spirit; perfect satisfaction, perfect happiness flowed on through man's Life, like the river that watered the Garden of God, gliding tranquilly on for ever.

Yet at the first Temptation man fell from God, loosed his hold, and in that fall lost all that made his Life before. Allegiance and Obedience must be tried in order to prove them; until tried, they are not. That is not obedience which only waits for a Temptation to disobey. That is not virtue which can offer no resistance to vice; if pure at all it is only pure by circumstances; change its circumstances, and it becomes impure. In this lies the difference between Innocence and Holiness. Innocence stands pure in itself because no Temptation has been presented to it. Holiness stands fast in the Lord, and in the Power of His Might resists, striving against Sin: therefore 'the Angels of God' (Gen. xxxii. 2) are called by Christ, 'Holy Angels' (Matt. xxv. 31), because when other Angels fell

they held 'their first Estate;' they held them fast by God, and are for ever secured in Holiness and Happiness through the Eternal Son—by Whom, and for Whom, all things were created. (Col. i. 16, 20.) Man, when Temptation was presented to him, did not hold him fast by God; he fell from God, fell into Sin, and Innocence was gone for ever; one spot defiles that robe, and a Sin-defiled nature can never be restored in itself; Sin can never enter Holiness, the Sinner, in his Sin, can never be restored to God.

When Man stood in Innocence, the Garden of God was no doubt often visited by Holy Angels; they would be as familiar friends to Man before Sin deceived, and blinded, and slew him. The Devil can transform himself into the appearance of an Angel of Light, but he was not suffered in that form to enter Eden. Had he appeared as an Angel, as one of those trusted messengers of God, Man had the more easily been taken off his guard; but when the Tempter took the form of one of the brute creation, Reason itself called upon Man to pause and consider the real nature of the Serpent's words.

The woman was found by the forbidden Tree. She may have wandered there in curiosity to look on the forbidden fruit. A desire to look upon the things not provided for us by God, to see them, to know what they are by the sight of the eye, is often still the first step in a downward course. A look opened the way to the Sin that overwhelmed the World! It is written, 'Mine eye affecteth mine heart' or

soul. (Lam. iii. 51.) And the Spirit of God has taught us to pray, 'Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken Thou Me in Thy Way.' (Ps. cxix. 37.)

It may have been that the woman suffered the Tempter to lead her to look on the forbidden Fruit. God had said, 'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.' Did she think within herself, God has not said, Thou shalt not look! there can be no disobedience in looking! We may be sure we are on dangerous ground when we wish to go as far as we can without disobedience. It is written of the way in which Temptation lurks, 'Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away.' (Prov. iv. 15.) The woman entered the path of Temptation; it led to the World's undoing! What can any expect who venture where God does not lead them? but an understanding blinded by the God of this World, and a Sin-deceived heart!

The woman does not appear surprised that the Serpent should speak with the words of man. The records of Holy Scripture reveal to us what is needful for our instruction, not what may satisfy the questioning curiosity of the mind. We are told that 'the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty' (2 Cor. xi. 3); he may have led her to believe that eating of the Tree God had forbidden man to touch, had given him the power of speech, even as he said that eating of it would make them as gods; for He who best knew 'that old Serpent called the

Devil,' said of him, 'he is a liar, and the father of it.' (John, viii. 44.)

The woman listened to the voice of the Tempter when he questioned the Word of the Lord, and led her on to doubt the instruction of Heavenly Wisdom and knowledge. The Spirit of God, in tender compassion to our weakness, exhorts us, 'Take fast hold of Instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy Life.' (Prov. iv. 13.) This our first Parents did not do, and they proved the terrible truth of the word of warning twice given to us by God, 'There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of Death.' (Prov. xiv. 12; xvi. 25.)

She gave her ear to the Tempter whispering doubt. To be forewarned, it is said, is to be forearmed; yet how often is the divine warning unheeded, 'Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.' (Prov. xix. 27.) It is easy to open the ear of the understanding to the Doubter; but after that, it lies beyond all human Power to cut away the fibrous roots of unbelief that spread and grow within, until the words of Him who is the Truth come with no quickening power, no balm of Life to the soul, because the poison of Doubt has choked the very avenues of Life.

Stand by the Death-bed of him who in life past lent his ear to the Doubter; see him vainly trying to lay hold of the Word of the Lord, while at

every effort the Doubts he willingly received into his soul rise up and weaken the dying grasp, that would go through anything for the faith of a little child to listen and believe. See the soul unable to meet one direct declaration of saving Grace, because of the terrible Doubts that, listened to in the days of vigour, now in the weakness and anguish of Death rise up instantly to deny, and as with an adder's deadly bite, infuse the poison of unbelief, that the Truth may not enter. Hear the dying voice as it speaks of those who cast Doubt on the only Word that can now stay the soul — the bitter reproach — the cry of anguish — 'They have no Faith! There is no Faith among them!' uttered in that lone chamber, unheard and unheeded by those who, still undismayed, act the part of the Destroyer.

'And the Serpent said unto the Woman, Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' All things had been seen by man in the pure Light of God's Truth, but now the woman looked on the forbidden Fruit in the false light that misleads, that makes things seem what they are not, and deceives the soul to its ruin. Looking at the Tree in the false light of that soul-Deceiver, it appeared what it was not. 'And when the woman saw that the Tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, and a Tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the

fruit thereof and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.' Adam was not deceived; the woman was deceived. Adam saw his ruin in it, yet he did it! (1 Tim. ii. 14.)

The deed was done, and could never be undone! We look on the act and call it Disobedience, Ingratitude, Unbelief, and then think we have taken the measure of Sin as it entered this fair Creation of God. But our measuring line is all too short. We have no plummet that can sound its depths. It was man giving up God, the creature giving up his Creator. It was man wilfully separating himself from God, and once to break off from God is to become a sinful creature for ever.

That single step out from God left man a sinner, the Sinful can never step back into the Holy, that step once taken was taken for ever; man could find no way of return; God's Holiness is for ever shut against Sin, it would cease to be Infinite Holiness if Sin could ever enter it. Man wilfully stepped out, and it closed against him, in his Sin, for ever.

What Sin was at first Sin is still, it never changes its nature; it may change its acts, but its nature is always the same; its place is out of God, and that which is out of God is against God; for the Creature's true place is to live and move and have its being in God; to be out of God is a false place for the creature, it is called 'The Fall;' it is a place of separation, rebellion and ruin.

Man having once broken off from God cannot

reunite himself; this is self-evident; the soul that by a single sin is broken off, separated from God, cannot reunite itself, neither can it be that God should reunite to Himself that which has become sinful. The reunion, if ever made, must be made in One, if such an One there be, who can stand between the Sinner in his sin, and God in His Holiness. One who can receive the Sinner Himself, in Himself cleanse the Sinner He receives from all Sin, and present him faultless before the Presence of God.

In this first entrance of Sin in Eden, God has been pleased to reveal to us the process of Sin. First, an uncertain wavering light is thrown over the object before us; the question, the doubt is entertained—‘Hath God said?’ It is held to be an open question, the case not clearly settled for or against. Then comes the insinuation,—there can be no great harm in doing that about which there is such a difference of opinion! And, finally, the soul arms itself with the assurance that God did not mean that so terrible a penalty should follow an act so small and harmless, as the partaking of anything that appeared in itself pleasant, and good as contributing to the experience of life! This same process of Sin, by which the soul of man was separated, broken off from God at first, is carried on day by day, and over countless souls it still prevails. Instead of the Word of the Lord, in all its bearings and applications, being the daily study and the daily rule of the heart and life, the soul allows itself to be bewildered

in the false, uncertain light of ever-varying questions, as to whether God has forbidden this or that object of personal gratification? How is it that there can be a doubt? Only because the soul walks not exclusively in the Light of the Lord—the soul stands not out in its clear, undoubting, indisputable allegiance to God. In one thing it is led by the Word of the Lord, in another by self-inclination, in another by the opinions of the world, and all this makes a haze of doubtful questioning, leading to the wrong conclusion, not the right.

‘To the Word and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this Word it is because there is no Light in them.’ (Isa. viii. 20.) ‘For the Commandment is a Lamp, and the Law is Light, and reproofs of Instruction are the Way of Life.’ (Prov. vi. 23.) When God gives His Light—His own Divine, Eternal Truth, we are responsible for the way in which we use it. If our eye be single, always directed in all things to the revealed Truth of God, we have the Divine Promise that our ‘whole body shall be full of Light.’ (Luke, xi. 34–36.) ‘The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.’ (Ps. xix.) The breathings of a Soul whose eye is single are given us in Psalm cxix.,—‘O how love I Thy Law! it is my Meditation all the day. Thou through Thy

Commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my Teachers, for Thy Testimonies are my Meditation. I understand more than the Ancients, because I keep Thy Precepts. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep Thy Word. I have not departed from Thy judgments, for Thou hast taught me. How sweet are Thy Words unto my taste, yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth ! Through Thy Precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way.' In these words we may hear the very breathings of the human Soul of the Son of Man, the Second Adam ; and these divine breathings are echoed back to Heaven from every soul restored by Him.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SENTENCE.

‘GOD IS NOT A MAN THAT HE SHOULD LIE, NEITHER THE SON OF MAN THAT HE SHOULD REPENT; HATH HE SAID AND SHALL HE NOT DO IT, OR HATH HE SPOKEN AND SHALL HE NOT MAKE IT GOOD?’—NUM. XXIII. 19.

‘ADAM heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden in the cool of the day;’ that voice that until now awoke in him the deepest thrill of life and joy; the voice of Him who made him, and caused each moment as it came to breathe on him in blessing; he heard that voice again, it brought the bliss of Heaven no more; his guilty soul grew darker still in fear beneath it, while he fled to hide both body and soul amidst ‘the Trees of God.’

‘And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy Voice in the Garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself. And He said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the Tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat? And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat.’

In this tremendous Interview, does the listening ear expect the dread sentence of Death from the voice of the Lord God?—having called the Sinner before Him and heard from his own lips the fearful fact, ‘I did eat.’ God had said, ‘In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die!’ Had God reversed the sentence that He speaks not to Man of Death? Was Man’s vain hope still to be suspended on the Devil’s lie, ‘Thou shalt not surely die?’ No. There was no need to speak of Death, that Sentence was already executed! ‘He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast.’ (Ps. xxxiii. 9.) Heaven and Earth may pass away, but the Word that God hath spoken shall not pass away. (Luke, xxi. 33.) The Sentence had taken effect. Man, whom God made a Living Soul, stood before his Maker ‘Dead in trespasses and sins.’ (Eph. ii. 1.) Nothing could stay the Word. Sin and Death are Eternally united. ‘By one man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death passed upon all men, for that all have Sinned.’ (Rom. v. 12.) ‘In the Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.’

What was it then to die? We call the failure of the bodily powers death. When the body yields its breath, we say, This is death! While the body breathes, we call it life. We speak according to the things of earth, and our brief space of earthly existence. We are willingly blinded to Eternal realities, even though they are pressed by every power-

ful motive and solemn warning on our attention, by Him who hath made us partakers of His own Eternity. We think of life as that which enables us to use the bodily senses; but the soul or spirit of man with all its powers is left more deeply sensible, more keenly conscious of all that opens around and before it, when the bodily senses narrow its vision no longer, and Eternity breaks on its astonished view.

That which made man to be a living soul was his spiritual life flowing from God. The moment that Man by his Sin separated himself from God he became a dead soul, his life was cut off at the Fountain Head. Instead of flowing freshly from God, the Eternal Well-spring of Life, it became a dead and stagnant pool, where Corruption and defilement gathered. The decay of the body must follow; a dead soul could not retain a living body; that which is allied to Sin must partake its nature and its sentence, Death.

It is a solemn thought, how certainly, how silently, how instantly, God's sentence is fulfilled. There was not a moment's delay, no fresh utterance of the terrible decree. Death followed Sin as the shadow follows the substance. Man sinned, and lo! the living soul rejoicing in the Life that flowed from and that rendered all to God, by Sin slew itself and was dead.

Those living souls were dead. Dead to God. Their innocence was dead, they were sinful now.

Their trust in God was dead, they were afraid at His familiar voice, and hid themselves. God had given to Adam so clear a knowledge of His Works in Creation, that Adam could name each object brought to him,—that act of deepest insight and highest intelligence, by which the distinct character of each was uttered in a special name;—so brightly shone the light of knowledge in the soul of Adam! God is spoken of as watching with Divine interest to see what Adam would call the Creatures brought before him, and whatsoever Adam called every living Creature, that was the name thereof. This knowledge no doubt extended to all that surrounded him; trees, plants, and flowers, inanimate as well as animate nature in the Garden in which God had put him, to dress it and to keep it. How unspeakably sorrowful then to see him hiding from His Gracious Creator, his Glorious Father and Friend, amongst those very Trees! Trees whose nature he so well knew, and beneath whose foliage he may have walked in familiar converse with God.

‘O Lord, I have heard Thy speech and was afraid.’ (Hab. iii. 2.) But man lost in the bewildering darkness of Sin, had not yet that holy fear, that reverence and awe of God. He could not then say, ‘O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee my God, for our iniquities are increased over our heads, and our trespass is grown up unto the Heavens.’ (Ezra, ix.) It was as yet that dread of God of which the Prophet speaks: ‘They shall

go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord and for the glory of His Majesty.' (Isa. ii. 19.) It was remorse, terror, and shame, that dared not look upon God; not repentance, contrition, and love.

True love and reverence are one in the soul of man, and cannot be parted; where the one is the other is; but Sin had withered both in man. When called into the immediate Presence of God and questioned, with the calm Majesty of Him who is the TRUTH, Adam sought to find the source of his sin in God, and in that highest gift of God which had been until he sinned his Crown of Earthly Blessing. 'The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat.' 'And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.' The first utterance of Life towards God, had they still retained any, would have been in each the heartfelt confession of their own Sin against the infinite love, that had poured out every blessing upon them; but dead in Sin, they felt not its evil toward God; they knew not any way of return, they sought not any, their effort was to hide, to excuse Sin. 'If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom.' (Job, xxxi. 33.) Sinking deeper in the Darkness of that Death, into which had God Himself not followed them in infinite Mercy, they had been lost for ever.

Man was dead in Sin. 'You being dead in your Sins.' (Col. ii. 13.) There was in him no life to God; nothing left that under favourable circumstances might bud and blossom, and bring forth fruit unto God. The Apostle who had been caught up unto the third Heaven teaches this fact with the utmost clearness, saying, 'I know that in me, that is, in my flesh,' (man's state by nature, man's standing in himself) 'dwelleth no good thing.' (Rom. vii. 18.) And in Eph. ii. he speaks of himself, with others, as having been by nature the 'Children of wrath!' So long as man is in his natural state, that is, so long as he stands in himself before God, he is dead; there is not, and there cannot be in him any true movement of the soul towards God.

May we not then with wondering awe enquire, how could the Sinner in his Sin stand in the Presence of God? Must not the wicked perish at the Presence of God? 'O the depth of the riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!' (Rom. xi. 33.) God, who foreknew man's fall, had before the foundation of the World devised means that His banished be not expelled from Him. (2 Sam. xiv. 14.) 'God, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest, by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ; who hath abolished

Death ; and brought Life and Immortality to Light through the Gospel.' (2 Tim. i. 9, 10.) Man stood in his own Death before God, and heard the Promise of Life in Another. 'Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered.' (Isa. xlix. 24, 25.)

With the Tempted and Fallen stood the Tempter and Destroyer. With Adam and with Eve the Lord God had questioned as a Father with His children, but He suffered not the Tempter to speak. Accused before the Dread Majesty of the Eternal by her whom he had drawn to Sin and Death, no voice inquired of him, What is this that thou hast done? He had once known the voice of the Lord God, kindling into brighter radiance and more thrilling life the ranks of Cherubim and Seraphim ; but he had fallen ! 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven.' (Luke, x. 17-19.) And now his deadly aim was to ensnare and drag with him to Hell's dark depths the sinless children of Earth. His strength had overmatched their weakness ; his guile had drawn them into the net, they were his captives, and even in the Presence of the Most High he held his prey ; but on him and him alone fell the dread sentence of the Second Death,—that Death on which there gleams no hope ; that Night that has no morning, no dawn, however distant, of Resurrection Light.

Fallen the Tempter was already, but he heard another Sentence now; he was to be crushed, his head bruised beneath the heel of that same woman's seed. 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.'

To Man the Tempted, Fallen, and dead in Sin, the Promise of Life in Another was given; while the merciful discipline of toil and pain was to humble in him the pride of self-exaltation, to prove the barrenness, emptiness, and vanity of all which would tempt the soul in pursuit of objects not given of God; while the weariness of toil and the disappointments of Earth, yielding the thorn and the thistle, should leave the yearning heart ready for the voice which would say, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' (Matt. xi. 28-30.)

'Till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.' Words whose sad reality each generation learns beside the grave, awful in their fatal sound, but yet embalming Immortality! A body that could not die must have shut man up in enduring sin, and pain, and weariness for ever; but 'them that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him.' (1 Thess. iv. 14.) 'It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weak-

ness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. . . . So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory! O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of Death is Sin, and the strength of Sin is the Law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' (1 Cor. xv. 42-44, 54-57.)

Another Sentence now has gone forth from the lips of the Eternal. A Sentence on whose awful issues hangs the bliss of Life that the shadow of Death can never darken, for it is everlasting Life; Life whose depths of purity Sin can never defile; Life whose joy is fathomless, and whose dwelling-place is beneath the overshadowing wings of the Most High; Life,—that is one in God, and with God for ever! Or the Second Death,—the Death in which the Tempter of Man's soul must dwell for ever; the Second Death that those must suffer who, when the beloved Son of God gave His Life a Ransom, refuse to enter by that New and Living way; who sin against the Blood that would have brought them nigh, and justly die the Second Death, because 'they will not come to Him that they might have Life.' 'He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the Record that God gave of His Son. And this is the Record,

that God hath given to us eternal Life: and this Life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not Life.' (1 John, v. 10-12.) 'He that believeth on Him is not Condemned: but he that believeth not is Condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.' (John, iii. 18.)

CHAPTER V.

THE PROMISE.

‘AND THIS IS THE PROMISE THAT HE HATH PROMISED US,
ETERNAL LIFE.’—1 JOHN, II. 25.

‘AND the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?’ What a question was that when God was the Questioner! ‘Where art thou?’ Not where I placed thee at large in this Garden I planted for thee; free, fearless, and glad at my Presence. Where art thou? Lost to Me; lost to thyself. Guilty, ashamed, afraid, hiding thyself from the Light of my Presence, not by the Trees planted to shelter thee, but by Sin and its dark shadow, Death!

Sinful Man was admitted into the immediate Presence of the God against whom he had sinned. But that sacred place made no change in him. Oppressed with guilt and shame, not able to lift up their face unto God, no godly sorrow filled their souls, no utterance breathed repentance. The soul, dead in Sin, lies hard and cold as a stone before God; if struck by the dread inquiry of the Truth, it may yield a spark of momentary light, or if some

beam divine falls on it, its surface may warm beneath the heavenly glow; but it neither melts nor softens to God; it is still to Him the heart of stone. Man may shine awhile with the traces of the beauty that the soul once had in God; but they are fading traces. The soul that having sinned has not been restored in Christ Jesus, is a ruined soul, lost and dead, and will in the end have to be hidden from the view of all whose life is hid with Christ in God. (Col. iii. 3.) The dead soul was not awakened, even though the voice of the Truth itself brought its Sin to remembrance.

But though as yet there was no change in Man's personal state, there was a change in his Place. Man in his Sin stood before God in His Holiness, and heard no curse uttered on his guilty head, felt no wrath. Not then did those dread lips pronounce the words, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels.' (Matt. xxv. 41.) Man had cast off his allegiance to God, he had given it over to one who declared himself, by all he said, to be the enemy of the Most High; man had cast away his happy life, and chosen death; but God left him not in the Death he had chosen. He called him unto Him, and questioned with him. He showed to man what it was to stand before Him helpless, hopeless, in his self-chosen Sin. 'The long-suffering of God is salvation.' (2 Pet. iii. 15.)

Angels in their high estate, and evil spirits lost

for ever, might look upon the scene and wonder ; for it is written, 'A Fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round about Him.' (Ps. xcvi. 3.) Man had become God's enemy by wicked works ; he had separated himself from the Author of his being, and the Giver of every good and perfect gift ; he had rebelled against Him, set himself up to 'be as gods' against the will of the Most High ; why then did not the Fire of God's wrath burn up these enemies round about Him ? Why was God's Justice silent ? How could the divine Holiness endure the dishonour of a broken Law ? and the creatures' Unbelief—that deepest insult to the God of Truth ?

Ponder the solemn question. If the Justice of God could be set aside, and His Holiness stained by allowing Sin in His creatures ; if the Holy Commandment delivered by God Himself could be broken, and the Word of the God of Truth disbelieved ; if the creature could exalt himself against the Creator ; if the creature so far as his own act was concerned could conspire to dethrone the Most High, and put the enemy of all Righteousness in the place of God in his soul and in the Universe ; if all this could be allowed, and God's Mercy pass over the wrong, who then could trust in God ? Where would be the Justice, the Holiness, the Truth of God ? Who could tell that another time, God's Power might not set aside His Mercy, or His Pity to one offender violate His Truth to all the

intelligent Creation. Then would God cease to be God, and a moral chaos, infinitely more terrible than that of created matter, would swallow up the Universe. 'Yea, let God be true and every man a liar!' (Rom. iii. 4.) God's Mercy is for ever sure because His Justice never swerves nor yields the utmost point; His Pity and His Love endure for ever because His Holiness admits no shadow of a stain, and His Truth is a Shield and Buckler.

How then could sinful man stand before God unscathed by the Fire of His Wrath, untouched by the Curse? for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them.' (Gal. iii. 10.) How could sinful man stand before God to receive only the Promise of Life, and the Chastening of Almighty Love?

Another Life was there unseen by all except the eternal Father, offering itself for sinful man on the Altar of Atonement, a Sacrifice for Sin, to be consumed by the Fire of the Holy Wrath of God against Sin. Another Head was bowed before the God of Judgment, to receive the Curse for Man. 'Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree.' (Gal. iii. 13.) 'Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts.' (Zech. xiii. 7.) 'Then said I, Lo! I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of

Me), to do Thy Will, O God.' (Heb. x. 7.) Before that Death for sinful Man had sealed His lips of Truth and Mercy in the silence of the grave, He said, 'I am come that they might have Life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' (John, x. 10.) 'I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' (John, xi. 25.)

To us the promise given to Adam that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, may appear barren as the unplanted grain; but who shall limit the means by which God quickeneth the Dead, and calleth those things that be not as though they were? 'He giveth not account of any of His matters.' (Job, xxxiii. 13.) Who shall say what glorious Fruit of Faith, and Hope, and Love, sprang up from that quickening Promise, planted and watered by God in the soul of sinful man? For us it is enough to be sure that the Promise was given. How enlarged that knowledge may have been we do not need to know; we, who dwell in the full Light, not of the Promise, but its blessed fulfilment. It was the voice of forgiving Love; it opened the door of Hope; it poured the Light of Life on the Darkness and Death of the soul. It led the Sinner out of himself to look for Salvation in Another; in One, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, the woman's seed, and yet mighty to destroy the works of the Devil, and to set his captives free.

We cannot trace the first softening of heart

under this rising Beam of Light and Life from Christ the Sun of Righteousness, the first godly sorrow working repentance to salvation (2 Cor. vii. 10), the first unutterable feeling of the Love of God that passeth knowledge. To have passed from Death unto Life, and that Life Everlasting; to find that Life hid in Him from whom no thief could steal and destroy it; to be nearer to the Eternal Father than ever, because brought nigh by the Blood that foreshadowed the Love stronger than Death! All this, and depths and heights far beyond it, lay open to the eye of Faith, so far as it may have pleased God to illumine that sight.

We cannot trace the newborn Life in its upward, onward course; each heart that lives in that new life must read, by its own experience, the dawn within the soul of Immortality that brightens to the perfect Day. Yet once the living rill gleams on our sight, when Adam, rising from the Death of Sin in himself to the blessed Promise of Life in another, and that the Woman's Seed, 'called his wife's name Eve, the Mother of all living.' Life in the Woman's wondrous Seed had chased the Darkness of Death away. However dimly and afar, it was still looking unto God's Promise in Christ Jesus, who is the Life of them that believe, and the Resurrection of the dead.

The Sinner's first utterance to God had been, 'I heard Thy voice in the Garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.' God's first

recorded act for the Sinner is, 'Unto Adam also, and his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.' Man never feels a need, a want, that God in His infinite mercy and love is not ready and waiting to meet and supply. The reason why the Blessing is not given is because the real need is not felt. A Voice is speaking, and it says, 'Because thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent.' (Rev. iii. 17-19.)

Far dearer to Man than unconscious Innocence, must have been the Clothing made for them to hide their shame and calm their fear, by Him against whom they had sinned. Then first to find that though they had fallen indeed from Innocence, fallen from God, they had not fallen from His Love, that it embraced them even while they fell, and raised them up, never to stand in themselves again, but in Another, in One who could not fall, in One who would give His Life a Ransom for them, in One whose precious Life-Blood should be the cleansing fountain opened by God for their sin and uncleanness (Zech. xiii. 1), and whose spotless, per-

fect Righteousness should be their garment of salvation, their covering robe before God and His created Universe.

A little further and we see that God had taught sinful man to draw near to Him by the life-blood of the offered Lamb, showing forth 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin of the World,' 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the World.' The coats made by the Lord God to clothe His fallen but restored children, may have been made of the skins of the animals slain in the sacrifices, that set forth that One, full, perfect Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, by which the Sinner who believes and receives the Atonement is not only cleansed, but clothed: 'Whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.' (Rom. viii. 30.) Then what was said of Israel, is absolutely and for ever fulfilled in those whom God hath saved and called with an holy calling. 'Thy beauty was perfect, through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.' (Zech. xvi. 14.) For this Isaiah raises his triumph song, 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of Salvation, He hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herself with her jewels.' (Isa. lxi. 10.) It may have pleased God, who at all times has deigned to teach by outward signs as well as inward pre-

cept, in this way to bring home with affecting reality the great truths afterwards to be more fully revealed by the Spirit.

Man must wander forth from Eden. The Garden of God was planted for Innocence; it was not there the sinful could be trained in the discipline that would, by heavenly grace, prepare the soul for higher blessedness than Eden knew. In Eden there was but one possible inlet to evil; it entered, it prevailed, and Innocence and Eden were lost for ever. The order must now be reversed. Man must inhabit a world in which there is but one entrance to Good, one way unto God, and that a Living way which God hath opened through His beloved Son. 'Jesus said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.' (John, xiv. 16.) And evermore, above the toil, the weariness, the want of earth, that voice is saying, 'Come unto Me, and I will give you rest' (Matt. xi. 28); 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved' (Isa. xlv. 22); 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink' (John, vii. 27); 'He that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst' (John, vi. 35); 'Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die: believest thou this?' (John, xi. 26.) 'Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto Me' (John, vi. 45); 'And him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.' (John, vi. 37.)

Man in Innocence had eaten freely of the Tree

of Life. To eat of it now would be, not his blessing, but his bane. Life for ever in himself would have been a curse, now that his nature was defiled with Sin. The Tempter in his blasphemy had said, 'God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' The lie was whispered in secret in the ear of the woman. Now all Creation heard the Tempter's lie, proclaimed in derision by the Lord God. 'And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live for ever! therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man, and He placed at the East of the Garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life.'

From the Garden of God, to a World that brought forth thorns and thistles unto them; from the happy work of dressing and keeping the Garden which God made to grow, to the toil of barren heights and sterile wastes; from calm within and around, to storms and tempests of the world without and the world within the soul—man was driven—compelled to go.—How otherwise could his reluctant feet have borne him from the Garden of God? But he went as the much forgiven, and therefore as the loving much; clothed by the Hand that he had broken

from, but that had restored, and that held and led him still. It was as if his repentant heart had heard the Father say of the lost son, who had naught but his wretchedness, 'Bring forth the best robe and put it on him' (Luke, xv. 12); 'For like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. As far as the East is from the West, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.' (Ps. ciii. 12.)

CHAPTER VI.

THE WILDERNESS.

‘FOR VERILY, HE TOOK NOT ON HIM THE NATURE OF ANGELS; BUT HE TOOK ON HIM THE SEED OF ABRAHAM. WHEREFORE IN ALL THINGS IT BEHOVED HIM TO BE MADE LIKE UNTO HIS BRETHREN, THAT HE MIGHT BE A MERCIFUL AND FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST IN THINGS PERTAINING TO GOD, TO MAKE RECONCILIATION FOR THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE. FOR IN THAT HE HIMSELF HATH SUFFERED BEING TEMPTED, HE IS ABLE TO SUCCOUR THEM THAT ARE TEMPTED.’—HEB. II. 16-18.

How unworthy we must feel in our Sinfulness to speak of ‘The Christ,’ ‘The Son of the Blessed,’ as He stood in His Holiness before God for Man! Yet if it be the utterance of the Faith He has given, it will bring glory to His Grace, and kindle in some souls a brighter flame of Heavenly love to Him, Who first loved us!

THE Tempter found the first Adam in a Garden, amidst all that was pleasant to the sight and good for food; the Second Adam in the Wilderness, the place of the Curse; a land of deserts and of pits—a land of drought and of the shadow of Death—a

land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt. In the Garden there was all that heart could desire; in the Wilderness there was all that the soul must shrink from, appalled.

The Second Man was the Lord from Heaven. Yet it was not as 'The mighty God,' that He went forth to meet the Foe; it was rather as He speaks of Himself in prophecy, 'A worm and no man.' (Ps. xxii. 6.)* Weaker far in His human nature than the first Man when in the Garden the Tempter came to Him; in Eden man's nature knew no want nor weakness; but the Second Man, He who stood for man in the Wilderness, 'Himself took our infirmities.' (Matt. viii. 17.) He knew the pangs of hunger and thirst; knew the weakness of weariness and want; knew the dread of lonely agony, and 'The Power of Darkness.' The very secrets of His heart lie open to us in the Psalms, 'the Gospels, and the Prophets, revealing to us that we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points Tempted like as we are, yet without Sin.' (Heb. iv. 15.)

Had Jesus Christ met the Tempter in the power of His Glorious Godhead, He could have consumed him with the Spirit of His mouth, and destroyed him with the brightness of His coming. (2 Thess. ii. 8.) But what then would have become of man? The broken Law of God would have hung about him still in endless Condemnation. Satan gone, but Sin remaining!—

* See Rev. John Stevenson, D.D., on Psalm xxii.

Man could only have followed his deadly Foe. Sin must draw to Sin wherever it be found, though on the verge of the created Universe; it must be irresistibly drawn at length into the whirlpool of Evil, the restless bottomless gulf of Sin; 'punished with everlasting destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of His Power.' (2 Thess. i. 9.) We find in the judgment of God the Sin that man accounts the least, classed with the Sin that man accounts the greatest. 'He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son. But the Fearful, and Unbelieving, and the Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars, shall have their part in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the Second Death.' (Rev. xxi. 7, 8.) Man makes distinctions, lightly saying of this or that which is not of the Father, but is of the World (1 John, ii. 16), 'There can be no great harm in it!' But the Day is hastening on silently, surely, when everything that is not of God must gather to Sin's appointed Place, must swell the mighty whole, and form a part of it for ever; when every soul which a single spot or stain of Sin defiles, must be numbered with the Sinful. 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil.' (1 John, iii. 8.) 'Now once in the end of the World hath He appeared, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself. And as it is

appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the Sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the Second Time, without Sin, unto Salvation.' (Heb. ix. 26-28.)

It was as the Son of Man that Jesus claimed His Right to fight the fight of Faith, against the Tempter's fiery darts of Doubt and Unbelief. He took no weapon save those which are given to man. He took unto Him the whole armour which God has provided for the children of men; the whole armour of God, that He might, as Man, be able to withstand in the evil Day, and having done all to stand. He stood to resist the wiles of the Devil, having His Loins girt about with Truth; and having on the Breastplate of Righteousness. His Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. Taking the Shield of Faith, wherewith to quench all the fiery darts of the Wicked; and the Helmet of Salvation; and the Sword of the Spirit. Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance. Strong in the Lord and in the Power of His Might (Eph. vi. 10-18), Perfect Man, He stood for man. He resisted stedfast in the Faith, and the Devil fled from Him. (1 Pet. v. 9; James, iv. 7.) And now, in our Trials and Temptations, with a hand stretched out to raise the Fallen and support the Weak, He says to us, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in my Throne, even as I also overcame and

am set down with my Father in His Throne.' (Rev. iii. 21.) For it is in Him, and by His Grace alone, we overcome; and He being perfect God as well as perfect Man, His Righteousness is Infinite, enough to clothe each soul in the Garment of Salvation, to cover them in the Robe of Righteousness, freely offered to every one who will receive it in 'the obedience of Faith.' 'Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness, to every one that believeth.' (Rom. x. 4.)

'That Old Serpent, called the Devil,' had seen unnumbered Generations sink in Death beneath the poison that he breathed,—the poison of Doubt and Unbelief; and with ages of deadly experience he prepared his snares to beguile the Promised Seed of the Woman, who came to meet Him 'in the likeness of Sinful flesh.' (Rom. viii. 3.) The Tempter had never met a sinless soul since Adam fell, his prey in Eden: and now the horrid Wilderness favoured his fell purpose, and lent its aid to his designs. 'If Thou be the Son of God, command that this stone be made bread.' Long before Satan had said unto God, 'All that a man hath will he give for his life!' (Job, ii. 4, 5), but now he met One who held the Life to be more than meat. (Matt. vi. 25.) 'Jesus answered him, It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God.' (Luke, iv. 4.) A soul dead to God puts the natural desires of the flesh; or of the mind first. 'What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or,

Wherewithal shall we be clothed?' (Matt. vi. 31 ; 1 Cor. i. 22-24.) But One whose Life is in God is not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. (Luke, xii. 4.) A soul that lives in God, and with God, will not sell that endless Life with all its depths of present Peace, and Hope of Heavenly glory, to ease the body of its pain or save its mortal breath. He who walks with God, and knows the mind of the Lord, and reads the Will and Purpose of His Heavenly Father, and holds the joy of fellowship with God, and breathes in communion with Him, will not hold his mortal life dear unto him, when to keep the life of the body he must loose his hold of God. 'Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the King, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thy hand, O King. But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.' (Dan. iii. 16-18.) For they had the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. ii. 16.) 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.' (Phil. ii. 5-11.)

But the Tempter's snare lay far deeper than the body's need. 'If thou be the Son of God!' The Work that the Father had given Him to do, depended on this lowly Son of Man being proved to be the Son of God with Power. The proof was

asked for, and a way of proving it pointed out that might appear both natural and reasonable. But hellish Doubt and earthly Unbelief could not pierce the Shield of Faith held by the Son of Man; the fiery dart recoiled on him who aimed it, when the suffering Saviour, spent with hunger and worn with forty days' unrest, made answer, 'It is written that Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God.' The Devil could not triumph there; but more than that, this wondrous answer proved to him he had never triumphed against God, for if the Word of God sustained the Life of Man, then that Life was hid with Christ in God, and sure of Immortality! If every Word of God was food for man's highest Life, then must the purpose of God be to abolish Death, and bring Life and Immortality to Light! 'I have esteemed the Words of His Mouth more than my necessary food.' (Job, xxiii. 12.) 'The triumphing of the Wicked is short; and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.' (Job, xx. 5.)

'And the Devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed unto Him all the Kingdoms of the World in a moment of time. And the Devil said unto Him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them, for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be thine.'

Satan tempts by the object he brings before the mind. As a spirit he acts on man's spirit, stirring

the desires of the soul. The Devil knew that unto the Son of God would be given, by the Father, the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession (Ps. ii.); that all kings should fall down before Him, all nations should serve Him; that He should live, and to Him should be given of the gold of Sheba; that Prayer also should be made for Him continually, and daily should He be praised; that His Name should endure for ever; that His Name should be continued as long as the Sun, and men should be blessed in Him. (Ps. lxxii.) But thirty years had passed away in humble life among the poor, and now the meek and lowly Son of Man was a lonely wanderer in the dreadful Wilderness, and no man gave unto Him. He must know Himself to be the Heir of the World, and why might He not be found ready, like Jacob of old, to gain the Promise under cover of a lie? If the Promise were His, why should He wait for the Lord any longer? If the Devil had so great power as to show Him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the glory of them, what should hinder His receiving them? and why should He, as man, refuse that small homage to one so powerful, by falling down before Him to acknowledge his power? The sight of promised good, and the fear of delay being loss, both move the soul to enter on possession.

But it was not the Promise of God, but the God of the Promise, which held the heart of the Man Christ Jesus. 'The Lord is the Portion of mine

Inheritance, and of my Cup. Thou maintainest my lot. I have set the Lord always before me, because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.' (Ps. xvi.) 'I seek not mine own Glory.' (John, viii. 50.) In the Majesty of His Truth, and Meekness, and Righteousness (Ps. xlv. 4), He stoops not to answer or unveil the lie, but proves all Worship to be the Prerogative of the Most High. 'And Jesus answered, and said unto him, Get thee behind Me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.' How keen on the Tempter must the sword-thrust of that Word have fallen! He who once knew what it was to worship God, now an outcast from Heaven, an alien from God, with no object of trust, hope, or love, no God to look up to, to reverence and adore; hateful and hating; that echo of a lost Heaven from the lips of the Holy One of God, must have opened wider to his view the awful void of existence in which he now stood, a lost being for ever.

This scene in the life of Him who came a Light into the World, if prayerfully considered, would dispel the darkness that now obscures the life of many who have never asked, 'From whom do I receive all that I possess? Am I making sure that I receive it all, and only from God? or am I, by some concession to the World, too lightly thought of by me, unregarded, it may be, by others, owning allegiance to the god of this world, who hath blinded the minds of them that believe not?' (2 Cor. iv. 4.)

It may seem an unimportant act, but if it be against the honour and glory of God, and not confessed and forsaken, it is an act of allegiance to the Destroyer, a link wilfully bound beyond all mortal power to sever. None but the Son of Man, who held Him fast by God, can loose the bands of those sins with which we are tied and bound. 'That God in all things may be glorified, through Jesus Christ.' (1 Pet. iv. 11.)

The Devil felt the steadfast Rock against which he aimed his fiery darts, which could not penetrate, but each recoiled upon himself; his broken faith, the trust he had cast away and trampled under foot, had left their aching void, which evil could not fill. He could not pierce the Shield of Faith held by the Son of Man, but the evil thought was ready,—might he not urge on that trust in God beyond the ground of Faith—the Word of God! One step beyond that ground of Faith would be Presumption, which is Sin. If that could be, the Tempter would prevail, and the whole human race perish hopelessly in the Second Adam's Sin.

'And he brought Him to Jerusalem, and set Him on a Pinnacle of the Temple, and said unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down from hence; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee; and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.' The Tempter took up the solemn declaration, 'It is

written.' He took his fiery dart from the sacred Words of the Most High, the Father's Promise to the Son; but he dropped the Truth that pointed it, and armed it with a lie. 'In all Thy ways,' was the divine Promise. No Promise meets the soul out of the way which God hath appointed for us. 'The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding, shall remain in the congregation of the dead.' (Prov. xxi. 16.) 'Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.' (Prov. iv. 26, 27.) What is evil, but to venture where God does not lead thee, where His Promise does not meet thee, where His Blessing rests not on thee? Therefore the earnest prayers, 'Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.' (Ps. xvii. 5.) 'Cause me to hear Thy loving-kindness in the morning, for in Thee do I trust. Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto Thee.' (Ps. cxliii. 8.)

'Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' That last word of appropriating faith, 'Thy God!' may have been the Word that sealed the Victory and Defeat. Fallen man, at enmity with God, afraid of God, not reconciled, not brought nigh by the Blood of Christ, refusing to seek to be accepted in the Beloved Son of God, has never known that blest relationship, and hears, unmoved, those final words, 'Thy God!'

But the Tempter staggered back beneath the twice-repeated sound. There is REMEMBRANCE in Hell; there is Memory in the Lost. The Devil knew that broken chain, that severed tie; he saw its heavenly lustre uniting the Son of Man unto the Father—a lustre that his dark Temptations could not dim, nor his worst assaults loosen. The Devil turned and fled. ‘And behold, angels came and ministered unto Him.’

With what adoring gratitude and love should we draw nigh unto the Conqueror over Sin and Satan! Hath He not triumphed gloriously, for us men and for our salvation? ‘Thou lovest Righteousness, and hatest Wickedness: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. . . . Therefore shall the People praise Thee for ever and ever.’ (Ps. xlv.) ‘This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our Guide, even unto death.’ (Ps. xlviii. 14.)

CHAPTER VII.

THE CURSE-BEARER.

‘AND THE SOLDIERS PLATTED A CROWN OF THORNS AND PUT IT ON HIS HEAD.’—JOHN, XIX. 2.

‘INSTEAD OF THE THORN SHALL COME UP THE FIR TREE, AND INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE; AND IT SHALL BE TO THE LORD FOR A NAME (OR MEMORIAL), FOR AN EVERLASTING SIGN WHICH SHALL NOT BE CUT OFF (OR ABOLISHED).’—ISA. LV. 13.

‘AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE A PRICKING BRIER UNTO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, NOR GRIEVING THORN.’—EZEK. XXVIII. 24.

‘THEN came Jesus forth, wearing the Crown of Thorns and the purple Robe, and Pilate saith unto them, BEHOLD THE MAN!’ This Proclamation of the Roman Judge, ‘BEHOLD THE MAN!’ has rung through eighteen Centuries of Time; unnumbered Generations have heard and echoed on the words; and yet to-day it thrills the world; countless hearts tremble in feeling or are hushed to silence at the sound. And whence this mighty, this unequalled power? Imperial Proclamations, affecting empires, have fallen to the ground, or lie embedded in stones

or books alone. This, as generation follows generation, is written on innumerable hearts for ever. He who uttered the Proclamation knew not of Whom he spake; he thought not his word or act would reach beyond the captive at his Bar; or live beyond the passing tumult he sought to quell in that small Roman Province. But through the Imperial Empire that Proclamation rang, more mighty far than any voice of Cæsar. There is no speech nor language where its voice is not heard. Its sound is gone out into all Lands, and its words unto the ends of the World; and whether read in the secret Chamber, or heard in the great Congregation, no word of man has ever had such universal power to still to listening awe the human heart.

Pilate, who uttered that Proclamation, might have known of Whom he spake. He had already questioned, and Christ had answered; but when the inquiry reached to the discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart, Pilate, who sat in Judgment on the Christ, would not judge himself; he turned from the searching Light of the Truth; would not hear the soul-convincing, soul-converting answer; rather would he give sentence to seal in death those lips that breathed the quickening Spirit of Everlasting Life.

Who is He whom Pilate proclaimed, saying, 'Behold the Man!' He wears a Crown. Is He then a King? When asked Himself, He answered, 'Thou sayest that I am a King.' In Heaven He is Christ,

the King of Glory! On Earth He is Jesus, the King of Sorrows; other men have the discipline and correction of sorrows; this is the Man of Sorrows! He may not, as other men, tread down the Thorns of Earth, or cast them aside; they must be woven into a Crown for Him. Thorns are the tokens of God's Curse upon the ground for Man's Sin; that Curse encircles His Head, rests on His brow; He is the Mighty CURSE-BEARER! He will be crowned with Thorns, that, watered with His Life-blood, the Thorn may be changed to the Fir Tree, and the Brier to the Myrtle Tree; that it may be to the Lord a Memorial, an everlasting Sign that shall not be cut off. He went down to the Grave, crowned with Thorns, that the Day might come when, to the true Israel of God, there should be no more a pricking Brier nor grieving Thorn for ever. He is going down to the gates of Death, and He goes as a King. Pilate, the Roman Judge, will write His Kingly Office above His Head, and the soldiers have platted Him a Crown of Thorns. On Earth they did unto Him what they listed: but other Worlds behold Him, the World of Glory, and the World of Woe; they see the Curse of God on Creation for Man's Sin—the springing Thorn woven into a Crown for Him.

We have seen Him in the Wilderness, 'tempted like as we are, yet without Sin;' standing as Man to fight the fight of Faith. Had He resisted the Tempter by one Act in His Eternal Godhead, that

one act as God would have disabled the Children of Men for ever from receiving the Gift of Righteousness, which is by ONE MAN, Jesus Christ. (Rom. v. 12-21.) But while it was as Man that He magnified the Law of God and made it honourable, by a free, full, and perfect obedience in all His Blessed Life of three-and-thirty years, He was at the same time God; and therefore the Righteousness He wrought as Man being perfect, it became infinite by the union of the Manhood with the Godhead, sufficient to cover and adorn every believing soul made willing to come and claim the Righteousness of God, 'which is by Faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe.' (Rom. iii. 22.)

Had our Lord Jesus Christ departed out of this World without Death, His Sinless Life, His perfect Love to God and man, would have been an everlasting Testimony and Memorial to the Law of God, as holy, just, and good. His pure and perfect Righteousness would have been infinite, sufficient to cover the nakedness of every soul before God. But could the sinful receive it? Could the Sinner in his Sin be adorned with that covering Robe? Most surely not! Sin cannot put on Righteousness. The Sin must be taken away, the Soul must be cleansed. There must be no spot in God's sight on the soul that is covered with the justifying Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is written of the Church of Christ, which is the company of all who, being justified by Faith, have Peace with God through our

Lord Jesus Christ,—‘The King’s Daughter is all glorious within.’ (Ps. xlv.) The Heavenly Bridegroom, addressing ‘the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife’ (Rev. xxi. 9; xix. 7-9), speaks in the Song of Songs, saying, ‘Thou art all fair, my Love; there is no spot in thee.’ (Canticles, iv. 7.) ‘Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.’ (Eph. v. 25-27.) The heart convinced of Sin prays, ‘Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my Sin. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.’ (Ps. li.)

It was written of the Christ, ‘This is His Name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’ (Jer. xxiii. 6.) But this He could not be unless He put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself. (Heb. ix. 26.) ‘Forasmuch then as the Children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through Death He might destroy him that had the power of Death, that is the Devil, and deliver them who through fear of Death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.’ (Heb. ii. 14, 15.) He who brought in everlasting Righteousness must also make an end of Sin. The Promise of this had led on the Faith of God’s believing People in every Age. It was foreshown in all the sacrifices appointed under the Law. ‘For it is not

possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away Sins' (Heb. x. 4); but those Sacrifices were a ceaseless witness that 'without shedding of Blood is no remission.' (Heb. ix. 22.) 'Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God. . . . By the which Will we are sanctified, through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . . For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' (Heb. x. 9, 10, 14.) 'In that day there shall be a Fountain opened to the House of David and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, for Sin and for uncleanness.' (Zech. xiii. 1.) That precious Life Blood of the Eternal Son was not spilt like water on the ground, that cannot be gathered up again, but it riseth like a fountain, and floweth like a living stream, between the Eternal Father and the souls by Christ Redeemed.

Death had no claim upon that pure and spotless Life; 'For the wages of Sin is Death' (Rom. vi. 23), but 'in Him is no Sin;' and 'Ye know that He was manifested to take away our Sins.' (1 John, iii. 5.) This is the declaration of the Beloved Son of God, 'He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.' (John, viii. 29.) This solemn assertion was made before Earth, and Heaven, and Hell, and not a single voice could deny. The Father said, 'This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased!' (Matt. iii. 17.) Earth, in the person of the Judge who judged Him, said, 'I find no fault in Him!'

(John, xix. 6) ; and Hell exclaimed, ' I know Thee, Who Thou art, THE HOLY ONE OF GOD ! ' (Luke, iv. 34.) Therefore of His pure and perfect Life He said, ' No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself : I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.' Yet His highest claim, as Man, He still referred unto the Father : ' This Commandment have I received of My Father ; ' ' I lay down My Life for the Sheep ; ' ' Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My Life that I might take it again.' (John, x. 14-18.)

He died for us over Whom Death had no power. If man dies for man, he yields a little sooner the breath that must expire. But when the Prince of Life gave Himself to Death, it was a shock that, had it not saved, must have destroyed the Universe of God. A sinful nature is always tending to Death. Sin darkens and deadens, and Death seals the doom. But for Him Who had Life in Himself ; for Him Who was the Light of God's Universe ; for Him whose Nature was Holiness, and who breathed in Love ; for Him whose human faculties and sensibilities had never been dimmed by a Sin or blunted by a transgression ; for Him to be held in all the violence of mortal anguish and the horrors of immortal woe, is what the thought of man can never reach, and what yet may well arrest and hold the soul in adoring Love for ever. ' Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by ? Behold and see if there be any Sorrow like unto My Sorrow, which is done

unto Me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted Me in the day of His fierce anger.' (Lam. i. 12.)

This SUBSTITUTION of the infinitely Righteous One for the finite and Sinful, was the Eternal purpose of the love of God. 'According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the World, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in Love.' (Eph. i. 4.) 'He hath made Him to be Sin for us Who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in Him.' (2 Cor. v. 21.)

In every nation under Heaven where 'Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ' is not known, we find the Sin-convinced soul trying to appease an offended Deity; or, with an instinctive feeling of the Fall, striving by a life of self-devotion, to raise itself to some distant and vague union with Him who inhabiteth Eternity. It is only where the wondrous truth is made known, by the Gospel of Glad Tidings, 'that God was in Christ, reconciling the World unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them' (2 Cor. v. 19), that slavish fear is changed into filial love, and the effort is no longer to appease an angry God, but to please, in all things, a Heavenly Father in Christ Jesus. Then, instead of going about to establish its own righteousness, the desire of the soul is to be found in Christ, having the Righteousness which is of God by faith; to know Him and the power of His Resurrection,

and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His Death. (Philip. iii. 7-14.)

He of whom the Roman Governor exclaimed, 'BEHOLD THE MAN!' was the wondrous 'DAYSMAN' for whom the Patriarch longed when, in the sense of God's exceeding Holiness, and his own exceeding Sin, he uttered the mournful lament,—'If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me! For He is not a man as I am, that I should answer Him, and we should come together in Judgment. Neither is there any DAYSMAN betwixt us, that might lay His Hand upon us both.' (Job, ix. 30-33.) BEHOLD THE MAN! His Hand of Deity is clasped in the Hand of the Eternal Father; 'I the Lord have called Thee in Righteousness, and WILL HOLD THINE HAND, and will keep Thee, and give Thee for a Covenant of the People.' (Isa. xlii. 6.) His Hand of Manhood holds ours; 'I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.' (Isa. xli. 13.) 'Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.' (Heb. vii. 25.) Therefore the glorious utterance of Faith given by the Spirit of God to every believing Soul is,—'I am persuaded that neither Death nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things Present, nor things to Come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall

be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Rom. viii. 38, 39.)

BEHOLD THE MAN! He stands for man. Behind Him lies the World of Sinners. Above Him the broken Law of God, proclaiming its dread Sentence, 'The Soul that Sinneth it shall die.' (Ezek. xviii. 20.) Beneath Him yawns the bottomless Pit, the final dwelling-place of every Sin-defiled being. Before Him rise the joys of Heaven, the Glory that He had with the Father before the World was. Through the Universe of God His Prayer is breathing, 'The Glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them; that they may be One, even as we are One. I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One. and that the World may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.' (John, xvii. 22, 23.) And as we hear the voice of the Heathen Judge proclaim, 'Behold the Man! another voice, a voice crying in the wilderness, proclaims, 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sin of the World.' (John, i. 29.)

IT IS FINISHED! Himself hath said it! Man in his Sin vainly sought to hide himself amongst the Trees of Eden. But now the Sinless Curse-Bearer 'hath borne our Sins in His own Body on the Tree, that we, being dead to Sins, should live unto Righteousness.' (1 Pet. ii. 24.)

CHAPTER VIII.

RESURRECTION.

‘I AM COME THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE, AND THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE IT MORE ABUNDANTLY.’—JOHN, x. 10.

HE who made this Promise of Life, and Life more abundant, entered Himself the Gates of Death. It is written of Him, ‘His visage was so marred, more than any man, and His form more than the Sons of men.’ (Isa. lii. 14.) With what awe must we listen to the lone breathings of Death from Him who utters this sublime declaration of Life! The Holy Spirit gives us Messiah’s utterance on the Cross.

‘I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and Thou hast brought me into the dust of Death. For dogs have compassed me about, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones, they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.’ (Ps. xxii.) Again, in Ps. lxix. we hear the

Mediator's awful Cry, 'Save Me, O God, for the Waters are come in unto my Soul! I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing. I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying, my throat is dried, mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty; then I restored that which I took not away.' It was He, the Eternal Word, by whom all things were made. He had made man 'a Living Soul'—that Life of Immortality He took not away; man had cast it from him, sold it to the Destroyer for the false Promise of an unknown gain. Christ had come to restore the priceless Blessing in uncreated glory. 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' 'God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.' (Rom. v. 8.)

The Gates of Death dare not open to receive Him of their own accord. How should the 'likeness of sinful flesh' (Rom. viii. 3), the garb of frail mortality, conceal from Death's dread angel the Lord of Life who gave him Immortality? The Holy Law that had gone forth from the Eternal Throne could not require that Righteous Soul to be surrendered up in Death's dark agony. The Redeemer had said, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than

twelve Legions of Angels !' (Matt. xxvi. 53.) The Devil and the Powers of Darkness might be suffered to assail the pure and perfect human soul of the Son of Man with the dread terrors of the Second Death, but they could not touch that Sinless Life. Jesus had said, 'The Prince of this World cometh, and hath nothing in Me.' (John, xiv. 30.) Man, blinded and deceived by Sin and Satan, desperate and remorseless, was suffered to pierce with nails and spear, to tear with scourges, and to rend with thorns, 'the one true and perfect flower which had ever unfolded itself out of the root and stalk of Humanity ;'* but man could not touch the Life. None could take that from Him, He laid it down of Himself. (John, x. 18.) He had come to plant on Earth again the Life that is of God. He would take His own Life, sinless and Deathless in itself, and plant it in the very ground which the Lord had cursed for man's Sin ; plant it in Earth's dark bed, the grave ; that having Life in itself, it might spring, and grow, and fill the face of the world with fruit. He had come that man might live to God ; a Life hid with Christ in God, a Life that could not die.

He demands admission at the Gates of Death, as the Bearer of the World's transgressions. 'I will ransom them from the Power of the Grave, I will redeem them from Death. O Death, I will be thy Plagues ! O Grave, I will be thy Destruction ! Re-

* Archbishop Trench.

pentance shall be hid from mine eyes.' (Hos. xiii. 14.) Death, as He entered its dread Shadow, must have shrunk affrighted back. Not one had ever passed that way before who held his own life at his will. Death could not take that sinless Life; but must receive it when it was given. Death met the Light of Life, and could not extinguish nor even darken it. Yet, entering Death as a Ransom, He who is the Life became its prey, yielded up the Ghost, breathed forth His human soul into His Father's Hands (Luke, xxiii. 46), for God had said of sinful man, 'Deliver him from going down to the Pit, I have found a Ransom.' (Job, xxxiii. 24.) Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. xv. 3.) But evermore, from verge to verge of Death's dark Shadow, a track of Heavenly radiance gleams, and often glows, for those whose Hope the Lord is; for He hath passed that way before, and they being followers of God as dear Children (Eph. v. 1), can say, 'Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy Rod and Thy Staff they comfort me.' (Ps. xxiii.) 'By His Light I walked through Darkness.' (Job, xxix. 3.)

Well the Redeemer knew the cost, the penalty of Sin, that heart of Man cannot conceive nor Angel ever know; but nothing stays Him on His awful way. He stands beside the brink of Sin and Death's tremendous Gulf. His eye is on the further Shore. He will cross that dread Abyss. He

will not quit His hold of a single Sin laid on His Sin-Atoning soul. Dying, He will die, and by that Death descending to the lowest deep of Judgment and of Wrath, He will leave buried there, where none can ever find, for none can ever search, the Sins of every soul whose Hope He will Himself for ever be. 'Thou wilt cast all their Sins into the depths of the Sea.' (Mic. vii. 19.) 'The iniquity of Jacob shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found.' (Jer. l. 20.) 'The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World.' (1 John, iv. 14.)

It was by the Cross that the Prince of Life (Acts, iii. 15), He who is 'The Life' (John, xiv. 6), He who quickeneth whom He will (John, v. 21), passed from Life to Death. It was on the Cross that the one Sacrifice for sins was offered, 'The Lamb of God which taketh away the Sin of the World.' (John, i. 29.) The Cross became the Clasp uniting Earth to Heaven. Sin had rushed between with overwhelming force; all that sinful man could have done would have been to stand and gaze at the ever-widening chasm; until the last lingering beam of Heavenly Light, the last trace of Creation's loveliness, was quenched and lost in hopeless Night—thick Darkness, even a Darkness which might be felt. (Exod. x. 21-23.) But the Lord was ready to save. (Isa. xxxviii. 20.) Only one thing could span the awful chasm, and reunite for ever what Sin had put asunder,—that one thing was the Cross of the

Son of God. O mystery of Love that passeth knowledge! The Cross brought the beloved Son of God under the CURSE; for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' (Gal. iii. 13.) When He who, as God, could say of the Most High, 'I and my Father are One' (John, x. 30), and speaking of Himself while dwelling here on Earth, could say, 'The Son of Man which is in Heaven' (John, iii. 13); when He offered Himself upon the Accursed Tree, without spot to God, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself; the Cross, by which He made Atonement and Reconciliation, was bound for ever to the Father's Heart. God must be parted from Himself, before the Cross of His beloved Son could be loosened from its everlasting hold on all that is of God. It was the final test of His Obedience; 'He humbled Himself and became obedient to Death even the Death of the Cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' (Phil. ii. 8-11.) What can be so precious to the Father's Love as the uttermost penalty endured by the Son to redeem, perfect, and secure for ever the objects of that Love; who, by reason of Weakness, Temptation, and Sin, were fallen, lost, and helpless? What could be so precious as Obedience,

even unto the accursed Death, to magnify and leave in infinite Honour through the Created Universe, the Moral Government of Jehovah, which, having been set at nought by His Creatures, must enforce its penalties or leave rebellion and Sin to triumph in the dishonour of the Divine Government for ever? This honour was rendered on the Cross to the uttermost.

While the Cross of Jesus clasped the Heaven of Heavens, it held the World of Sinners. He who hung thereon is bone of their bone, partaker of the same flesh and blood. (Heb. ii. 14.) He bears our Sins in His own Body on the Tree, 'the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.' (1 Pet. iii. 18.) He met the awakening Sword of Justice, which had waited for His coming. (Zech. xiii. 7.) It smote not until then; He received its first and latest stroke. Having been once sheathed in the Sacred Body of Emmanuel, God with us, it strikes not again; kindled for ever in the radiance of His Divine Eternal Light, it lies refulgent now at rest in the bright armoury of God. It is not the sword of Divine Justice that slays the Sinner—the Sinner slays himself; his blood is on his own head. 'Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have Life.' (John, v. 40; Ezek. xviii.)

The boundless Love of God, the boundless joys, of Heaven, flow through the Crucified to man; and every willing and obedient soul has access through Christ Jesus, by one Spirit, unto the Father. (Eph. ii. 18.) All who are brought nigh to God by the Blood of Christ are embraced by the Eternal Faith-

fulness of God. (1 Cor. i. 23, 24, 30.) And We learn His Wondrous Power in the Gentleness that hath made us Great. (2 Sam. xxii. 36.) As by Death the Son of God destroyed him that had the power of Death, that is the Devil, so the Gates of Hell cannot prevail against His Cross. It clasps the Created Universe to God, and none can sunder it! 'This Man, after He had offered One Sacrifice for Sins for ever, sat down on the Right Hand of God. From henceforth expecting until His Enemies be made His footstool. For by one Offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' (Heb. x. 12-14.) Well may the soul to whom Life and Immortality are thus brought to Light exclaim, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (Gal. vi. 14.)

'Now in the Place where He was Crucified there was a Garden; and in the Garden a new Sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus.' It was in the Garden of God that man sinned, and that Death passed on man because of Sin. It was in the Garden that God called the Sinful before Him, and taking to Himself their Sin and Death, clothed them with the Garment of Salvation, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith, and showed unto them the path of Life. It was not by an Act of Pardon that man was delivered from the bands of those Sins that by his frailty he had committed; it was by a wondrous and glorious Substitution of Persons. Pardon could not make an End of

Sin. Substitution of Persons could, when it was God in Christ for Man, the Just for the unjust, the Righteous One taking the place of the Sinful, standing Himself under the guilt, condemnation, and punishment; that the Sinful might be made Heir of the Righteousness which is of God by Faith. (Heb. xi. 7.) And because the Righteous One was infinite in all things, therefore He could make an infinite Atonement, and restore in Himself every willing soul unto God.

The Promise is fulfilled to the uttermost. Emmanuel, God with us (Matt. i. 23); God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. iii. 16), has dwelt amongst the Sons of men for three and thirty years in perfect holiness and perfect love. 'Who did no Sin.' (1 Pet. ii. 22.) The Beloved Son of the Father, and yet The Son of Man. Born unto us a Child, and yet the Mighty God. (Isa. ix. 6.) He hath given His Life a Ransom. He entered the Gates of Death, taking away the Sin of the World. He died and was buried. He sleeps within the ground the Lord God had cursed for man's Sin. The Precious Seed is sown. 'Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift!' (2 Cor. ix. 15.)

The place of His Sepulchre was appointed of the Father. It was in the Garden of God that the flaming sword turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life. That flaming sword is now laid up for ever in the armoury of God; and the voice of Love breathes through the stillness of the

Sabbath air, 'I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever!' (John, vi. 51.) He was numbered with the Transgressors in His Death, for He bare their iniquities. (Isa. li.) But having made an end of Sin, His Body might not sleep amidst the mouldering dust of sinners. They might not leave Him dead on Golgotha, the place of a skull, for He could see no corruption. 'And when Joseph had taken the Body he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the Rock, and he rolled a great stone to the door of the Sepulchre and departed.' Buried in a Garden, a place redeemed from the barren hill of Death,—where the transgressors of the Law suffered under the Curse hanging on a Tree: 'Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.' (Gal. iii. 13.) He lies within the Garden, a place of blossoms and of fruit, where the Rose and Lily bloom, and the Trees of God stand not, as on Golgotha, for Death beneath the Curse, but for healing and for food. He lies within the Rock, from whence the fount of Living Waters shall arise, flowing from the Throne of God, giving Life to every land.

The Sacrifice is offered, Love's Atoning Work is done. The Universe is hushed. This solemn pause gives to all worlds, which God hath brought within the Knowledge of His Love, the awe of Accomplishment, and the thrill of Expectation. Truly this was the Son of God, and He is dead! Earth

questioned it in the person of the Roman Judge, and knew it of the Centurion. Hell knew, and dared not question, for it tasted Death unlike to all before—the Death of those who Sin against the Atoning Sacrifice: who having sinned away the life that once was theirs in God, became the Tempters of the Innocent, and then conspired against the Holy One of God, spreading their every snare, and arraying all their terrors to beguile or to appal the Son of Man, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. Heaven needed not to question of Death or Life; it had received the Eternal Word. He had entered Paradise.

His Body sleeps within the Garden. A Watch of Roman soldiers guards His tomb, and stone and seal have made it sure, lest any steal the Body and say that He is risen! Is there hope concerning this thing? Can He who was delivered for our offences, rise for our justification? Not unless He has made an end of Sin, and brought in everlasting Righteousness! Is there any doubt above Him as He sleeps in Death? Not any, for He gave not up His Life until He knew that all things were ACCOMPLISHED. He sleeps, but it is the Sleep of Life, rather than Death. The Conqueror rests; the Battle fought, the Victory won. The Children whom God hath given Him lay down their mortal bodies one by one, to sleep in dust, until He come to wake them out of sleep. By sleeping in the Tomb Himself, He blesses every grave of those who sleep in Him. How beau-

tiful the deep solemnity that breathes over all the Universe of God, while He, by whom the Worlds were made (Heb. i. 2), sleeps the deep sleep of Death within the new Tomb hewn out by Joseph in the Rock ! It is written in the Song of Songs, 'I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up nor awake my Love till He please.' (Cant. ii. 7.) Earth had no thought to wake that sleep. The Children of Disobedience, moved by blind terror, tried the helpless force of barriers to shut in the Dead : while the Daughters of Jerusalem only thought to sweeten sure decay by Eastern spices, and to weep beside the Body of the Lord.

But as Death had no power at all against His Life except that Life had been given it, so neither could it hold that Life when given. He yielded up His Life with the Shout of Victory, that echoes on for ever through the Universe of God. 'IT IS FINISHED !' And when He rose, the First Begotten from the Dead, Angels proclaimed that Second Birth, 'He is risen, as He said unto you !' In St. Matthew's Gospel we read, 'Behold, there was a Great Earthquake, for the Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and rolled back the Stone from the door of the Sepulchre and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow, and for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men.' While He Himself arose in the same Native Majesty as when from the pillow where He slept He woke at His Disciples' cry, and said to the storm, 'Peace, be

still,' and there was a great calm. (Mark, iv. 35-41.) They beheld the Glory of the risen Christ, the same as when He dwelt among them, as the Only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. And the first word of Resurrection Life that fell on mortal ears, was the tender inquiry as of old into mortal woe, 'Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?' While her own familiar name, 'MARY,' breathed from the risen God, as of old from the Man of Sorrows, changed her tears of grief to rapture such as Child of Earth had never known. He is 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' (Heb. xiii. 8.)

CHAPTER IX.

ASCENSION.

‘GOD, WHO IS RICH IN MERCY, FOR HIS GREAT LOVE WHEREWITH HE LOVED US, EVEN WHEN WE WERE DEAD IN SINS, HATH QUICKENED US TOGETHER WITH CHRIST (BY GRACE YE ARE SAVED), AND HATH RAISED US UP TOGETHER, AND MADE US SIT TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS.’—EPH. II. 4-8.

UP to the very gates of Death He is found of them that sought Him. He may be seen and known of all men. To His Cross the way is open. Even in His extremity of Death, the dying thief who had blasphemed Him, found Him to be his Redeemer; and turned, in penitence and prayer, to die with Jesus in the Peace of God. But beyond the Cross, not one who has not known Him in His Sin-Atoning Death can ever find Him; no alien heart, no careless eye, can behold the risen Christ. None can see Jesus raised for their justification, who have not seen Him dying for their offences. (Rom. iv. 25.)

In the Record that God has given us of His Son, we see that up to the very darkness of Death every one had readiest access to Him. Behold Him in Bethlehem’s stable, the Shepherds pressing round

the new-born Babe. The Wise Men gathering to His feet. The learned men around Him in the Temple. While at Nazareth He dwelt familiarly amongst the homes of men. In the savage Wilderness the Tempter found no hindrance—the Devil himself could come near unto Him. On the Shore, and in Desert-places, the multitudes pressed upon Him. In the Cities they thronged Him. In the Highways they followed Him. By night or by day they found easy access to Him. All manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, was brought before Him. The Unbelieving questioned with Him. Deceivers tried to entangle Him in His words. False witnesses perverted His deeds and words. Judas bore Him constant company. Pilate judged Him. Herod set Him at nought. The soldiers scourged Him. A Slave smote Him on the cheek. They Crowned Him with Thorns; they derided Him; they vehemently accused Him; they mocked Him, wagging their heads; they crucified Him; and with Him they crucified two thieves, one on His Right Hand and the other on the Left.

But when once past the Darkness of Death all is changed. He had paid the infinite Debt, He had borne the infinite Penalty. The infinite Holiness, Justice, and Love of God, were alike Glorified, and the everlasting Father could receive to His embrace His sinful but Blood-washed children. ‘Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in His own Blood; and hath made us Kings and Priests

unto God.' (Rev. i. 5.) From that hour His Redeemed Children alone could behold Him. Even in His Burial no alien hand was suffered to approach Him. There was Joseph of Arimathæa, an Honourable Counsellor, who waited for the kingdom of God,—to him it was given, in his own new tomb which was hewn out of a rock, to bury the Christ of God. And Nicodemus also, who at the first came to Jesus by night; and the Disciple whom Jesus loved; and the women who followed Him from Galilee, and ministered unto Him. These were they who with hearts of love and sorrow buried Jesus in the rock-hewn tomb.

When He rose, the Watch of Roman Soldiers set around the tomb felt the Earthquake, saw the Angel, and became as dead men; their senses all benumbed by fear, they might not see the risen Christ. The Love of the Cross must train the Sinner's eye to meet the Light of Resurrection Life. 'Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.' (Rev. iii. 18.) It was His own Promise, 'He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.' (John, xiv. 21.) Mary Magdalene, weeping at His Grave, beheld Him first, in the Light of the Resurrection morning. After that He was seen of Cephas; the loving heart that in its hour of weakness had denied Him, was the first of the Eleven Disciples to behold Him; his bitter weeping for his base denial, changed to joy unspeakable in this immediate mani-

festation of his risen and forgiving Lord. As the Disciples walked by the way, the risen Christ drew near and went with them. 'Did not our hearts burn within us as He talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures!' And they told how He was made known to them in the breaking of Bread. He stood in the midst of them as they were assembled in the House, and said, 'Peace be unto you ! . . . Behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself!' As they toiled on the sea and had taken nothing, when the morning was come He stood on the shore, and said, 'Children, have ye any meat?' They answered Him, 'No.' He directed their labour, blessed it with large increase, and then bid them come and dine of the Feast He had prepared. Afterwards He was seen of above five hundred Brethren at once; but no cold, indifferent ear heard His voice of Life on Earth again; no unbelieving soul beheld Him. In some hearts there were doubts, but they were the doubts of longing souls, the doubts of them who believed not for joy; or of them who believed not for sorrow; or because love itself is oftentimes slow to realise the fact it most longs to see established.

It is so still, now that the purpose of His Death has been revealed. The eyes are never opened to see Jesus risen, until He is seen bearing our sins in His own Body on the Tree; that we being dead unto Sins should live unto Righteousness. (1 Pet. ii. 24.) Death closes the earthly scene, the Day of

grace. Resurrection Life opens on Heaven. 'I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received' ('I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by Revelation of Jesus Christ.' Gal. i. 11, 12.) 'How that Christ died for our Sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.' (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.) None can say of the Risen Christ with Faith's rejoicing utterance, 'It is the Lord!' unless they can also say, with appropriating faith, 'He died for our sins!'

And will it not be even so again when unto them that look for Him He shall appear, the Second time, without Sin, unto salvation?—When He who loved the Church and gave Himself for it, . . . that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blame, (Eph. v. 25–27.)—When He shall come again to receive His people to Himself,—Will stranger eyes behold that Meeting, or alien hearts draw near? When He went up from Earth on Olivet, a Cloud received Him out of the sight of those who, though they saw Him no longer, still stood gazing up into Heaven. And of the Ascension of His People it is written, 'They shall be caught up in the clouds' (out of sight) to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.' (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) When Joseph, that type of Christ, would make himself known to his assembled Brethren, he cried

'Cause every man to go out from me;' and there stood no man with him while Joseph made himself known unto his Brethren. (Gen. xlv. 1.) The Bridegroom met the Wise Virgins alone; the foolish were gone to buy, too late, the neglected oil. After-scenes there will be, august and terrible, when every eye shall see Him (Rev. i. 7); 'The Lord my God shall come, and all the Saints with Thee.' (Zech. xiv. 5.) But not, as it appears, until 'the Children of the Resurrection' have been caught up in the clouds, to meet their Crucified, Risen, and Glorified Saviour in the air; the thrill of that unutterable joy will be alone with Jesus. A stranger intermeddleth not with that joy.

There are three Facts, or Acts of Faith in the soul that is born again into the Life that is of God. The soul becomes one with Christ in His DEATH, His RESURRECTION, and His ASCENSION. Their order cannot be broken. Does it not then become an all-important question, Am I by Faith a partaker in the DEATH of the Lord Jesus Christ? If not, I can have no part in His RESURRECTION, nor in His ASCENSION! God gave His only-begotten Son. Have I received Him? There must be two parties to every Gift, the Giver and the Receiver. A Gift, however costly in itself, is nothing, and can be nothing as a gift, until it is received. Can any think that God will account 'His unspeakable Gift' to be theirs who never settle the question as to whether they have received it or not? The purpose of God



is declared in 1 John, v. 9-13. God has given the Record of His Son 'that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life!' He who gives no earnest heed to attain to that knowledge, but leaves it to Eternity to declare whether he has, or has not, received the Gift of God, will God confirm to such an one the Death and Life of His Beloved Son? Heaven, and Earth, and Hell, send back the awful denial!

Why did the Holy One of God die for Sin, if not to give His Life a Ransom for many (Matt. xx. 28); a Ransom for ALL who will receive Him to the glory of God. (1 Tim. ii. 6; John, i. 11, 12.) The Apostle says, 'Ye are dead?' (Col. iii. 3.) How is it that he asserts the fact to the believing souls to whom he wrote, saying, 'Ye are dead?' Because 'we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead.' (2 Cor. v. 14.) The fact is accomplished; it only waits the soul's full and free acceptance, and lo, the Death of the Lord Jesus stands before God as thy Death, satisfying the utmost demands of the Divine Law, and presenting to God for thee an offering of a sweet savour, even that wondrous compound of perfect Holiness and perfect Love. Justifying God in the Sentence of Death for Sin, seeing that by nothing short of Death could Sin be finally excluded from the Universe of God. Bringing the Lost again to the Father's embrace, purged from all conscience of Sin by the Blood of the Cross; and secured in Christ Jesus for ever. Exalting the infinite Holiness and unchangeableness of the Law and

Government of God, before all created beings for evermore. 'He sent Redemption unto His People; He hath commanded His Covenant for ever; Holy and Reverend is His Name.' (Ps. cxi. 9.)

From out this Death flows Life, as the living waters from the unsealed spring; even as the Water and the Blood flowed from Emmanuel's pierced side. 'I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?' (John, xi. 25, 26.)

This Resurrection Life in Christ Jesus which Faith receives and appropriates as its own, by the Free Gift of God, is a Life that leaves the Sentence of Death executed behind it. 'It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again; who is even at the Right Hand of God.' (Rom. viii. 34.) It is a Life that flows through Death; and the Penalty cannot be demanded twice. 'Begotten again to a lively (or living) Hope by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead' (1 Pet. i. 1-3); 'Born Again' (John, iii.); 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto Sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord' (Rom. vi. 11); 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' (John, xiv. 19.)

The Faith that receives Christ Jesus the Lord as the Free Gift of God, is not a vague, uncertain hope that, because Jesus Christ died and rose again, therefore the Sinner may rise to Life Everlasting. Faith lays hold of a Fact, and makes that Fact its own.

Reason, rightly exercised on the Revelation of Holy Scripture, proves, beyond a doubt, that the Son of God died upon the Cross to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself. Faith, believing the Record God has given of His Son, appropriates the precious Sacrifice, and says, 'He gave Himself for me!' Reason, rightly directed, beholds the acquittal of the Divine and Sinless Substitute by the Resurrection from the Dead. Faith appropriates the Life that flows from that Death, and says, 'I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.' (Gal. ii. 20.)

That Christ died and rose again, according to the Scriptures, is an Historical Fact. That He gave Himself for me, is a Personal Fact. An Historical Fact can never bring Christ home to the soul as its Hope. A Personal Faith can and will, for it is written, 'The just (or justified) shall live by Faith.' (Gal. iii. 2.) An Historical Faith can never be the pulse of Life; it lies outside the soul, not beating within it, not regulating and proving its Life. A Personal Faith is expressed in those wondrous words, 'This is the Record, that God hath given to us Eternal Life, and this Life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not Life.' (1 John, v. 11, 12.)

Resurrection Life opens on Heaven. It must be so if the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ has Clapsed

the World of Sin and Death to the World of Holiness and Life. Heaven must be open to all who by that narrow way, that Blood-stained Tree, even by Jesus Crucified, seek the Home of Everlasting Life. 'He that followeth Me shall not walk in Darkness, but shall have the LIGHT OF LIFE.' (John, viii. 12.) The World, and the Flesh, and the Devil conspire to drag down this Heaven-born Life to Earth, and Sin, and Self; and too often they prevail against the new-born soul. But they cannot prevail against Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar People, zealous of good works (Tit. ii. 14); 'Holy and without blame before Him in love.' (Eph. i. 4.) It is no longer man's frail innocence that is his hold on Life. The Life of him who has believed the Record God has given of His Son, is hid with Christ in God. (Col. iii. 3.) And none can pluck the priceless jewel thence; no Tempter can deceive to its betrayal, no Foe can reach it to destroy. 'As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name.' (John, i. 12, 13.) 'He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of Righteousness for His Name's sake.' (Ps. xxiii. 3.)

This Resurrection Life is raised up, and made to sit in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. ii. 4-6.) It is one Life, blending two Worlds. Christ said, 'I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved; and shall go in and out, and find pasture.'

(John, x. 9.) Earth and Heaven are alike open to those who abide in Christ; to those who dwell in God. 'When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of Death, Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers.' They have nothing, they own nothing, apart from their crucified, and risen, and ascended Lord. 'To me to live is Christ.' Not a single act now and then, but the very life flows from Him, flows through Him in those Heavenly Places, where Christ is at the Right Hand of God. Whether they eat or drink, or whatsoever they do, they desire to do all to the Glory of God. (1 Cor. x. 31.) Whatsoever they do in word or in deed, they desire to do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by Him; and whatsoever they do, to do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. (Col. iii. 17.) Their souls are purified in obeying the Truth through the Spirit. (1 Pet. i. 22, 23.) And they follow after Holiness in all manner of conversation, because it is written, 'Be ye holy, for I am Holy.' (1 Pet. i. 15, 16.) Speaking the Truth in love, they grow up unto Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ. (Eph. iv. 15.)

Earth can say of them that they are not slothful in business. Heaven can witness that they are fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. They are risen with Christ, and seek those things (both for themselves and for others) which are above, where Christ sitteth at the Right Hand of God. Earth cannot

break their Peace, for it is the Peace of God, the atmosphere their spirits breathe is the atmosphere of Heaven. Earth cannot chill their Love, for they dwell in God, and God is Love. Earth cannot loose the Anchor of their Hope, for it is Christ in them the Hope of Glory. (Col. i. 27.) And it entereth into that within the veil; whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus. (Heb. vi. 19, 20.) They own the ties of human Brotherhood beyond other men, but their Conversation (or Citizenship) is in Heaven, from whence also they look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body (the body of our humiliation) that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious Body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. (Phil. iii. 20, 21.)

‘We which believe do enter into Rest.’ (Heb. iv. 3.) This sitting in Heavenly Places with Christ, does it exalt the creature in itself? Far from it; Self must be, as it were, lost sight of; it is and can be only ‘in Christ Jesus.’ No thought or feeling, word or act, that is not in Christ Jesus, can ever breathe in those ‘Heavenly Places.’ Is this a loss of Personal Life? So far from it it is the Life ‘more abundantly’ that Christ said He came to bring; and nothing less is felt to be Life by those who know its divine Power.

When raised up together, and made to sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus, are Sin and Death forgotten? ‘And I beheld, and lo, in the

midst of the Throne, . . . a Lamb as it had been slain.' (Rev. v. 6.) The Cross of the Lord Jesus is the centre of the created Universe. Faith has a vision that knows no distance when God presents the object. If there be darkness still to the eye of Faith, it is but dark with excess of Light, which is ever opening its unsearchable, infinite depths to the ever-strengthening gaze. 'For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and having made Peace by the Blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven.' (Col. i. 19, 20.)

CHAPTER X.

THE SEAL AND EARNEST.

‘NOW HE WHICH STABLISHETH US WITH YOU IN CHRIST, AND HATH ANOINTED US, IS GOD; WHO HATH ALSO SEALED US AND GIVEN US THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT IN OUR HEARTS.’—2 COR. I. 21, 22.

WE have seen, by the Light of Holy Scripture, that no created being can stand in himself before God. It was tried in Angels, and they fell. It was tried in man, and he fell. It is not tried again. The Creature saith, It is not in me!

It is plain also that a created being must be under the Law of its Creator. The creature would instantly perish if not upheld by the Will of its Creator; and if upheld by its Creator’s Will, it must be governed by its Creator’s Law; it must be answerable to the Will which is revealed in the Law of its Creator. Angels Sinned against the Will of their Creator; they kept not their first estate. (Jude, 6.) Man Sinned against the one only Command that restrained him, and fell under the penalty of disobedience, which was Death. ‘But when the fulness of the time was come God sent forth His Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law.’ (Gal. iii. 4.) Even the Son of the

Highest when He took upon Him a created nature had to be under the Law of God. That Law He not only fulfilled, but magnified, by a perfect obedience; and the transgression of that Law, by man, He atoned for 'by tasting Death for every man.' (Heb. ii. 9.) 'He redeemed them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.' (Gal. iv. 5.) 'The Wages of Sin is Death; but the Gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.' (Rom. vi. 23.) 'That in the Dispensation of the fulness of Time, He might gather together in one all things in Christ; both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, even in Him.' (Eph. i. 10.)

It is plain that he who stands in himself before God, even though he be the least sinful of all men, must be condemned; because a single Sin makes him a transgressor of the Law. And it is written, 'Whosoever shall keep the whole Law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all;' he is become a transgressor of the Law. (Jam. ii. 10, 11.) Sin is not an Evil that can be shut into an act. Sin, let in at the least point, defiles the whole nature. One blossom is enough to prove the nature of a Tree or Plant; one seed, though light as gossamer, will spread the thistle from which it grew. It is written, 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' (Heb. xii. 14.) But Holiness and Sin can never blend; they are as Light and Darkness; therefore man in his sinful nature can never stand before God; no

Sin-defiled Creature can ever mingle with the blessed ranks of holy beings who stand before the face of God. Man, seeing that he is fallen, ruined, lost in himself, must go out of himself, and take his stand in another, even in 'that Man whom God hath ordained.' (Acts, xvii. 31.) 'Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption; that according as it is written, he that glorieth let him Glory in the Lord.' (1 Cor. i. 30, 31.)

The question is no longer, 'How should man be just with (or before) God?' (Job, ix. 2.) That question is for ever answered. God is Himself the 'Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' (Rom. iii. 19-26.) But there is another question, How can the Sinner be led into this Divine standing-place 'in Christ Jesus?' When man was yet in innocence, did he not, at the first temptation, exalt himself, and reject God? How much more now, when the Light that is in him is become Darkness, will he choose his own way in self-dependence, and find, as all have found before him, that 'the end of that way is death!' (Prov. xiv. 12.) It is true that the way is opened through the tender mercy of our God; not back into created innocence, which the next temptation might again destroy; but 'into the Holiest, by the blood of Jesus; by a new and Living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His Flesh.' (Heb. x. 19, 20.) To be

‘partakers of His Holiness.’ (Heb. xii. 10.) To be ‘filled with all the fulness of God.’ (Eph. iii. 19.) To be hid in God, safe from the Tempter’s power; no more to hide amongst the Trees of the Garden; ‘I flee unto Thee to hide me.’ (Ps. cxliii. 9.) ‘Thou shalt hide them in the Secret of Thy Presence.’ (Ps. xxxi. 20.) ‘For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His Pavilion, in the Secret of his Tabernacle shall He hide me.’ (Ps. xxvii. 5.) ‘Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of Thy Wings.’ The wondrous Way is opened for the redeemed Sinner to dwell for ever in the Love that saith, ‘All things are yours!’ (1 Cor. iii. 21–23) —to be no more an outcast, but a Son dwelling in the Father’s presence, ‘where there is fulness of joy; and at His Right Hand pleasures for evermore.’ (Ps. xvi. 11.) ‘An heir of God, a joint heir with Christ.’ (Rom. viii. 17.) All this is freely given of God. But the sinful one turns from the Holy One; sinning and loving to sin; wandering further and further from God. Lost, and yet he will not be found by Him who came to seek and to save. ‘Ye will not come unto me that ye might have Life.’ (John, v. 40.)

Must the Sinner perish with Everlasting Life and Glory within his reach, and offered freely? Must he perish in the Sin he loves, ‘twice dead, plucked up by the roots’ (Jude, 12)—because when the way is open to the heart and the arms of the Everlasting Father, he will not return?—perish

when Salvation is before him; when God is 'ready to save,' 'waiting to be gracious' (Isa. xxx. 18); when Christ is ready, saying, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me' (Rev. iii. 20); when the Angels of God are ready, rejoicing over the Lost who is found? (Luke, xv. 10.) Must the Sinner perish because there is in him still 'an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the Living God?' (Heb. iii. 12.)

It would, it must be so, if the Sinner were left to his own choice. The soul that has once turned from God will never of itself return to Him again. 'All we, like sheep, have gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way.' (Isa. liii. 6.) But it is written, 'Thy People shall be willing in the Day of Thy Power.' (Ps. cx. 3.) God would never have given His Beloved Son in vain. It was the Father's Promise in Prophecy, 'He shall see His seed!' 'He shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied.' (Isa. liii. 10, 11.) God having given, in His infinite Grace, the place of Sons, in and by Christ Jesus, to those who were Lost, gives also the Spirit of Christ. 'Because ye are Sons,' because ye are called of God to this Divine relationship of highest Grace and Privilege, 'God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father!' (Gal. iv. 6.) 'As many as are led by the

Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.' (Rom. viii. 14.)

Over the darkened soul of man, as once over the darkened deep of Nature's formless void, the Spirit of God moves. 'And God said, Let there be Light! and there was Light.' (Gen. i. 3.) 'For God who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the Light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ.' (2 Cor. iv. 6.) When in this Divine Light of the Spirit of God, the transgressor of God's Laws sees that the Father 'sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins' (1 John, iv. 10); that 'Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth' (Rom. x. 4); then receiving the Gift of God, he is led by the Spirit into 'the Obedience of Faith.' (Rom. xvi. 26.) Beholding in Christ Jesus the utmost Letter of the Law fulfilled; the utmost penalty endured; he believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing has Life through His Name. (John, xx. 31.) The Law of God no longer hangs over the soul with its dread alternative, 'Do, and live.' (Ezek. xx. 11, 13, 21.) 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' (Ezek. xviii. 4-20.) It is, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' (Acts, xvi. 22-34.) The soul receiving Christ Jesus the Lord, receives the perfect fulfilment of the Law, the perfect Atonement for Sin. The Law of God is not only fulfilled by Christ for every soul believing in Him, but the Law is

embodied in Christ; receiving Christ the soul receives the Law of God in all its Holiness, in all its Perfection; the soul receives both the Law and its fulfilment in Him; and not only so, the soul receiving Christ receives Him in His Death, and 'He is the Propitiation for our sins.' (1 John, ii. 2.)

What is there in Earth or Heaven to condemn the soul that has received Christ Jesus the Lord? In Him the soul receives the Law of God in all its perfect Holiness; in Him the soul receives the infinite fulfilment of that Law; in Him the soul receives the infinite Atonement for its Sin. The Sinner,—standing alone, condemned by the Holy Law of God, an alien from all that is of God, a stranger to the Promises, without Hope, and without God in the World,—is now, in Christ Jesus, brought nigh unto God, and receives the adoption of a Son. (Eph. ii. 12, 13.) 'For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.' (Rom. viii. 2.)

'Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His.' (Rom. viii. 9.) 'I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.' (Ezek. xxxvi. 27.) 'Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God. Not in Tables of Stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.' (2 Cor. iii. 3.)

The soul is born again of the Spirit (John, iii.); led by the Spirit out of its own state of Sin and Death, into Christ; to stand by Faith in Him. 'If any man be in Christ he is a new Creature, old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.' (2 Cor. v. 17.) The man has a new standing; he stands no longer in himself before God; he stands in Christ. The man has a New Life, for 'he is passed from Death unto Life.' (John, v. 24.) The Life he now lives in the flesh he lives by the faith of the Son of God (Gal. ii. 20); he owns a new relationship. 'Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a Price; therefore glorify God in your body and your spirit, which are God's.' (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.)

In the Psalms we find the outpouring of prayer for the renewing grace, the upholding power, and the divine illumination and leading of the Spirit of God. (Ps. li. 10-12; Ps. xliii. 3.) In the Books of Proverbs, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Joel, we have the wondrous Promises of the outpouring of the Spirit. (Prov. i. 23; Isa. xlv. 3, lix. 1; Ezek. xxxvi. 27; Joel, ii. 23.)

When Christ came, the true Aaron, the High Priest of good things to come (Heb. ix. 11), the precious ointment, the anointing of the Spirit, was poured upon His Head as Man, and went down to the skirts of His garments (Ps. cxxxiii.), for 'God

giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him.' (John, iii. 34.) Therefore it is said of those who are in Christ, 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into One Spirit. . . . Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular.' (1 Cor. xii. 13, 27.) This is the highest Unity in which Brethren can dwell; of which all other Unity is but a type. 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is! As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the Mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the Blessing, even Life for evermore.' 'I am come that they might have Life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' (John, x. 10.)

This was the Prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ, 'That they all may be One, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us.' (John, xvii. 21.) This is the declaration of God by the Apostle, 'He that is joined unto the Lord is One Spirit.' (1 Cor. vi. 17.)

Our Lord Jesus Christ made known to His Disciples the blessed work of the Spirit of God in Man. It is by the Spirit that Man is born into the Kingdom of God. (John, iii.) When born into the Kingdom he needs the Spirit no less to give Life in the soul to the Word of the Lord, to quicken 'the letter' into a Living Power. (John, vi. 63.) It was in the Spirit only that they could worship the Father. (John, iv. 23-26.) It was the Spirit of Truth who

was to convince them of Sin; that Sin which is the root of all Sin, UNBELIEF. It was the Spirit that was to convince them of Righteousness, because the Divine Substitute for man was raised and received of the Father, which Christ could not have been had He not brought in everlasting Righteousness. And of Judgment because the Prince of this World is judged; those who are 'in Christ' are already judged, acquitted, and accepted in the Beloved. (Eph. i. 6.) It is 'the Prince of this World,' the Devil, who stands, with those who have 'rejected' or 'neglected' this great Salvation (Heb. xii. 16, 17; ii. 1-4), unsheltered, to meet the Righteous Judgment of Almighty God. (Matt. xxv. 41.) Precious are the Promises given by Christ of the indwelling Presence of the Spirit of God. (John, xiv. 16.) 'He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.' 'He, . . . the Spirit of Truth, will guide you into all Truth.' 'He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine and show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I that He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.' And He was named by Christ The Comforter,—the very balm of healing to the wounds of Sin and Sorrow.

Three marks are given of God to distinguish the true Israel or People of God. 'Who worship God in the Spirit; and rejoice in Christ Jesus; and have no confidence in the flesh.' (Phil. iii. 3.) They are

spoken of as 'the Habitation of God through the Spirit.' (Eph. ii. 22.) 'Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' 'If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.' (1 Cor. iii. 16, 19.)

The indwelling of the Spirit of God in the soul of man, is given of God as the **EARNEST** of the full and perfect Redemption which He hath given in Christ Jesus, for the soul and body of him who believes on the Name of the Only Begotten Son of God. (2 Cor. v. 5; John, iii. 18.) 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.' (1 John, iii. 2.) Of this the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the **EARNEST**. (2 Cor. i. 22.) 'If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the Dead dwell in you, the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.' (Rom. viii. 11.) The perfection of the renewed Life of those who are the Children of God by faith in Christ Jesus is now a hidden Life, a Life hid with Christ in God; it will not appear, it will not be manifested in its perfection and glory, until Christ shall appear. (Col. iii. 4.) But the renewed Life of the Soul by the Spirit of God is the **EARNEST** of its completion in due season. 'We all with open face beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the

Lord (the Glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth), are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of God.' (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18.) Those who receive Christ Jesus the Lord, are begotten again to a lively (or living) Hope of an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. (1 Pet. i. 3, 4.) The Holy Spirit is 'the EARNEST of this Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His Glory.' (Eph. i. 13, 14.) 'Ourselves also which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of the Body.' (Rom. viii. 19-27.)

As the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God is given as the EARNEST, securing the full possession in the appointed time, so is He also given as the SEAL, by which the lawful possessor is secured to all that is covenanted for by God, in Christ Jesus. 'For all the Promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, to the Glory of God by us. Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also SEALED us, and given the Earnest of His Spirit in our hearts.' (2 Cor. i. 20-22.) 'In whom also ("in Christ") after that ye believed ye were SEALED with that Holy Spirit of Promise.' (Eph. i. 13.) 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are SEALED unto the Day of Redemption.' (Eph. iv. 30.)

The Holy Spirit is also the WITNESS by whom the Adoption into the Family of God is confirmed and established. 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry ABBA, FATHER. The Spirit itself beareth WITNESS with our spirit that we are the Children of God.' (Rom. viii. 14-16.) 'Many will say unto me in that Day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name cast out Devils, and in Thy Name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity.' (Matt. vii. 21.) An outward Profession, without the renewing Grace of the Holy Spirit, is iniquity in the sight of God. (Isa. xxix. 13, 14; Ezek. xxxiii. 30-33.) 'Ye hypocrites! Well did Esaias prophesy of you saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.' (Matt. xv. 7-9.) No Witness of man is received of God, without the WITNESS of the Spirit. 'It is the Spirit that beareth WITNESS, because the Spirit is Truth.' (1 John, v. 6.)

We are warned not to resist the Spirit of God. (Acts, vii. 51.) We are warned not to grieve the Spirit of God. (Eph. iv. 30.) We are warned not

to quench the Spirit of God. (1 Thess. v. 19.) And the Lord said, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.' (Gen. vi. 3.)

'There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus; who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.' (Rom. viii. 1.) 'For through Him we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by One Spirit unto the Father.' (Eph. ii. 10-18.) 'The Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst Come; and whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely.' (Rev. xxii. 17.)

CHAPTER XI.

THE WORLD.

‘LOVE NOT THE WORLD, NEITHER THE THINGS THAT ARE IN THE WORLD. IF ANY MAN LOVE THE WORLD THE LOVE OF THE FATHER IS NOT IN HIM. FOR ALL THAT IS IN THE WORLD, THE LUST OF THE FLESH, AND THE LUST OF THE EYES, AND THE PRIDE OF LIFE, IS NOT OF THE FATHER, BUT IS OF THE WORLD. AND THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY, AND THE LUST THEREOF; BUT HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF GOD ABIDETH FOR EVER.’—1 JOHN, II. 15-17.

WHAT is the World that God commands me not to love? This question is often asked, and too often left unanswered. The inquirer finding no ready reply, takes refuge in ignorance, self-persuaded that what is not distinctly seen or understood can only be taken in a general way, or cannot be followed by all; that the habits, the customs, and the pleasures of the World cannot be condemned for those in whose path they are strewn, if only things that are known to be wrong are avoided.

But we are led back to the question, What is Right and Wrong? What is it that constitutes the Nature, the very being of Right and Wrong? Is it our opinion of a thing that can make it Right or Wrong for us? Then there could be nothing really Right or Wrong, because no two persons hold

exactly the same opinions. If there be such a reality as Right and Wrong,—and well we know there is!—then it must be fixed and judged by some unwavering Law, and the only fixed unwavering Law is the Law of God. That Law is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. If that Law governs a man it reigns in his heart, it directs and restrains his affections; he who has not the Law of God written on his heart is no subject of God's Kingdom. Give Him thy heart, and He receives thee as thou art; withhold from Him thy heart, and nothing else thou canst offer will find any acceptance with Him! 'My son, give me thine heart.' (Prov. xxiii. 26.)

The Law is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' And 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' (Matt. xxii. 37-40.) 'Love not the World; neither the things that are in the World; if any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him.' (1 John, ii. 15.) It is plain that these two things, the love of God and the love of the World, cannot be united. 'If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him.' This divine declaration stands like a Rock, a barrier that none can pass over, between the love of God and the love of the World. In some who love the World the waves of natural emotion and sentiment may rise high, but they can only fall back again into the source from which they rose; they cannot pass the barrier

of God's unchangeable Word, they cannot flow to the feet of 'Emmanuel, God with us.' There may be the most elevated emotion that the soul of man is by nature capable of; but the divine reality, the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost (Rom. v. 5), there cannot be; 'the love of the Father is not in him.'

St. John says, 'The whole world lieth in wickedness'—that is, in sin. (1 John, v. 19.) The World lies in separation of heart from God. This is its state of Sin or Wickedness; it does not dwell in God; it is content in separation from God. The World has its god; it is an awful fact, to which the World itself is blinded, but that very blindness to the fact is one proof given us of its reality. It is written in 2 Cor. iv. 4, 'The god of this World hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the Glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.' The World is deceived and betrayed by false appearances; 'for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the Ministers of Righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.' (2 Cor. xi. 14, 15.) The World has its rulers: 'The Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit that now worketh in the Children of Disobedience.' (Eph. ii. 2.) 'The rulers of the Darkness of this World.' (Eph. v. 12.) The Saviour said, 'The Prince of this World cometh, and hath

nothing in me!’ (John, xiv. 30.) The World has its own maxims, its own rules of honour, its own habits and customs, and its own benevolences; but it cannot rise above that which is its own; it cannot rise to the mind of Christ (Phil. ii. 5); it cannot live in the Spirit of Christ. (Rom. viii.) Jesus said, ‘If ye love me keep my Commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the World cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him, but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.’ (John, xiv. 15–17.) They have not come unto God that His Laws may be put in their minds, and written in their hearts. (Heb. viii. 10.) They have not hid His Words in their heart that they might not Sin against Him; their way is not cleansed by taking heed thereto according to God’s Word. (Ps. cxix.) ‘O Righteous Father, the World hath not known Thee!’ (John, xvii.)

There are those who, in dread of the World, break away from Family ties, and the social duties and privileges of life; thinking by absolute submission to rules framed by man to shut out the World from heart and life. But is it not written, ‘One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are Brethren’ (Matt. xxiii. 8–12); and a voice breaks in on their self-chosen separation, the voice of Prayer, the Great Advocate making Intercession for those whom God hath given Him, ‘I pray not that Thou

shouldest take them out of the World, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.' (John, xvii. 15.) And this Divine Command is laid on all who bear the Christian Name: 'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.' (Phil. iv. 8.) The thought may arise, If I am to think on 'whatsoever things are lovely,' this allows me the gratification of the eye, the ear, the enjoyment of all that sentiment and taste can open to my admiration. But does not the Command also say, 'Whatsoever things are pure?' 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' Christ said, 'for they shall see God.' (Matt. v. 8.) That in which God cannot be seen, cannot then be pure; and the only things that God commends to us as lovely, are the things that are pure:—

"Why should we fear youth's draught of joy
If pure, would sparkle less!
Why should the cup the sooner cloy
Which God hath deigned to bless!"

The thought may arise, Surely there are many who mingle freely in the World and its interests, and yet shine in the purest affections of earth; the duties of home, the ties of kindred and friendship are fulfilled by them; they cultivate the powers God has given them—genius, intellect, and taste, benevolence also and self-denial: they shine in all these, and are not these things lovely and pure?

They are lovely and pure in themselves in men's estimation, standing on a level one with another, judging by their fallen instincts, seeing all things only in their outward manifestation, unable to trace the soul in its nature. But in God's sight nothing is pure that has not its Life in Him, nothing that is defiled by the least mingling of Sin, or sullied by a taint of decay; nothing is pure in God's sight that comes short of His Holiness; 'His angels He chargeth with folly, and the Heavens are not clean in His sight.' "The Divine contentment in Angels was not perfected until they were gathered together in Christ." 'That in the Dispensation of the fulness of time He might gather together in one all things in Christ; both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, even in Him.' (Eph. i. 10.) 'I in them, and Thou in me; that they may be made perfect in One.' (John, xvii. 23.)

No person or work can be accepted of God, except in and through Christ Jesus. The fruits of the ground brought by Cain as an offering to the Lord, were no doubt the best and most perfect his labour had yielded. In themselves they were more lovely than a slain lamb; in our sight they were pure, but God had not respect unto Cain and his offering. It was not brought in 'the Obedience of Faith.' The slain lamb set forth Christ in His Death as the way of access unto God; there is no other way of approach unto God. 'This is my Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.' (Matt.

iii. 17.) If God could have been pleased with the best works of sinful Man in themselves He would not have given His Beloved Son to Death, to open a Way in which 'He might be Just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' (Rom. iii. 26.)

The young Ruler, of whose converse with Christ we read in all the three Gospels, was one whose life in the estimation of man must have been lovely and pure, for he had lived to observe all the claims of family and social relationship; but when he came to Christ in order to ask what good thing he should do to obtain Eternal Life, and Christ put to him the test of the love of the World, or treasure in Heaven; the love of the World would not yield to the love of God in Christ. 'He was sad at that saying, and went away grieved.' (Mark, x. 22.) St. Luke says, 'He was very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, He said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God!' He went away, but not happy in his choice. The eye of Divine and infinite Love had rested on him, and though 'he went away,' the World could no longer fill or satisfy his heart while the hope of Eternal Life grew dim before his longing soul; and though we know it not, we yet may think that the Lord drew him, through that sorrow of soul, with the cords of Love, to find 'the Law of His mouth better unto him than thousands of gold and silver.' (Ps. cxix. 72.)

It is not a question of what our gifts or circum-

stances may be. The question is whether we take our stand in Christ, and hold all things in Him? The most perfect discharge of earthly duties, or the most splendid development of natural powers, if not held of God in Christ, must be held in separation from God, and cannot therefore have the Divine approval, acceptance, and blessing. Not being in Christ they retain the imperfection of the Creature; they are imbued with the taint of a sinful nature, and therefore must perish from the Presence of Him who is a consuming fire. (Heb. xii. 29.) Whatsoever cannot be begun, continued, and ended in Christ, is Sin; 'whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin.' (Rom. xiv. 23.) And what could the heart desire more than the entire purifying and perfection of all its life, flowing through Christ to God; the acceptance and approval of all in Christ Jesus? 'Who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the Presence of His Glory with exceeding joy.' (Jude, 24.) Then from the least act to the highest attainment, in God's sight, all is penetrated with, and radiant in, the Light Divine; then the very Will becomes a Work, 'for if there be first a Willing Mind it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.' (2 Cor. viii. 12.) 'For in Him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead Bodily. And ye are Complete in Him, which is the Head of all Principality and Power.' (Col. ii. 9, 10.)

The soul of man may be compared to a spiritual

Mint; everything that proceeds from it is stamped for its currency with the impress given it by the soul from which it proceeds. If the soul be of the World you will find its life wearing only some earthly impress, whatever may best serve the object before it. If the soul be of God, the likeness or image of Christ will be the impress stamped on the currency of that life. 'To me to live is Christ.' The coinage that is of the World may circulate freely, and be valued and praised by the World that it serves; but it is not the pure gold of the Sanctuary. Weighed in the balances of Heaven, it is found wanting; it bears not the image and superscription of Christ the King of Glory; it must perish with the World that it serves; its comparative merit or demerit in the estimation of man changes not the Balance of Eternal Truth. While 'the Obedience of Faith' will find its very Life laid up within the Heart of Him who to the blessed and wondering soul replies, 'YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME!' (Matt. xxv. 40.)

Those whose Life is governed by this Divine Principle of 'Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ' are called in Holy Scripture 'The Household of Faith' (Gal. vi. 10); 'Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus' (Gal. iii. 26); 'This is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.' (1 John, v. 4.) The enquiry may be made, If then I do everything trusting in Christ, will that prove me to be a Child of God, a Member of Christ, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven? In answer to this we

must remember there is the danger of trust without obedience, which is called in the Bible a dead Faith, a Faith in name, but not in reality. It is only a Living Faith that can unite the soul to the Living God. A Living Faith in God will direct the daily Life in obedience to the Will of God. Therefore in Holy Scripture it is called 'The Obedience of Faith.' (Rom. xvi. 26; 1 Pet. 1, 2.) The Faith that wilfully separates itself from Obedience to the Word and Will of God must be a Dead Faith.

If any say, I am free to do this or that, because God has not forbidden it! We must remember that we are no longer in Eden of which God said, 'Of every Tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil thou shalt not eat of it.' (Gen. ii. 15-17.) We are in the World. An enemy hath sown tares amongst the wheat. The Question is changed. It is no longer, Has God forbidden this? The Question is now, Is this given me by God? or am I taking of another that which is not of God for me? This Question asked day by day in 'the obedience of Faith' would separate us in heart and life from the World that lieth in Sin; and change our Earthly life into a Heavenly. For if we refused the evil in 'the obedience of Faith,' we should be sure to choose the good in the same obedience of Faith. If a thing be not of God, or, as St. John expresses it, 'not of the Father,' it must be evil, because it is separated from God; for all that is 'not of the Father,' must be

separated from the Father. If a thing be of God, but not of God for us, then it is evil for us if we partake in it, because God has not given it to us. The Temptation of our Lord in the Wilderness proves that what God does not give to us, if we take it, we take it from the Tempter, who is the Devil, 'the god of this World.' So we see that our Lord Jesus Christ stood in 'the obedience of Faith.'

Therefore the outpouring of Prayer is given us by the Spirit of Grace and Supplications for the direction of our Life in all things. 'I have set the Lord always before me, because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved' (Ps. xvi.); 'Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not' (Ps. xvii.); 'Shew me Thy ways, O Lord, Teach me Thy paths.' (Ps. xxv.) Such Prayers are given us by the Spirit of God who helpeth our infirmities. (Rom. viii. 26-29.) The answering Promise is as freely given, 'The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way' (Ps. xxv.); 'I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye' (Ps. xxxii.); 'I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not. I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make Darkness Light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.' (Isa. xlii. 16.)

If we have no Divine Chart to guide us, no Compass of Faith ever true to Faith's Divine Object,

then, indeed, we are cast on a darkened, fathomless, limitless ocean, and can only steer on in our ignorance, or drift in our helplessness, until we meet the wave that engulphs us. If we have a Chart it can be only The Record God has given us; if we have a Compass it must be Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and he who steers not in all ways by this Chart, in the obedience of Faith, cannot fail of erring from the pathway of safety, and mistaking his course.

‘He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.’ (1 John, ii. 6.) Surely none who are abiding in Christ by a Living Faith, daily striving to walk even as He walked, can find any real difficulty as to what is ‘of the World,’ and what is ‘of the Father?’ Two questions are often raised; one, the observance of the Lord’s Day. The hallowing of the Seventh Day was not an ordinance of God for the Jews only, it was appointed in Eden. (Gen. ii. 3.) ‘God blessed the Seventh Day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God had created and made.’ The Day was therefore observed as a Day Holy to the Lord, until the New Creation in Christ Jesus was accomplished: until Christ said of it, ‘It is FINISHED:’ until He rose in Whom every attribute of the Divine Glory rested complete, and magnified for ever. From that time we find the Day of the Resurrection of the Lord observed in the Records of Holy Scripture, and therefore by the Divine Will. And can the reason be less binding? Is not the

Divine Rest infinitely higher in the Risen Christ than in the first Creation? The Day is not binding in Jewish Ceremonial; but can it be less Holy to the Lord than the Sabbath of Eden? less blessed and sanctified of God? Can we think that the Worship of God in the Beauty of Holiness, in Spirit and in Truth, is less to be the atmosphere of the Day? Can we question its being less a Sacred Pledge from God to Man than the Sabbath of old? 'I gave them My Sabbaths to be a Sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.' (Ezek. xx. 12, 16, 20, 21.) Ezekiel bore this testimony, and was unheeded. 'And Ezekiel mourned and said, Ah, Lord God, they say of me, Doth he not speak Parables?'

If the completion of the first Creation, of which Man was a part, liable as that Creation was to Sin and the Curse, Decay and Death, was celebrated every Seventh Day by Divine appointment, how should not the New Creation, in which Man receives, in Christ Jesus, the Power of an Endless Life, and in Whom the whole Creation finds its Hope (Rom. viii. 18-24), be celebrated with holy joy in the spirit of the Divine Promise? 'If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My Holy Day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the Holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause

thee to ride upon the High Places of the Earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy Father; for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.' (Isa. lviii. 13, 14.)

Another often-repeated question is of the Amusements or Pleasures of the World; of which the Race-course, the Ball-room, and the Theatre, are among the chief. Can it be necessary for those who take the Word of Holy Scripture in its simplicity as a rule of life, to do more than try these amusements by the test there given of that which is in and of the World? 'The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are not of the Father, but are of the World.' The column may be crowned with a Corinthian capital, 'pleasant to the eyes' (Gen. iii. 6); but its base is in the depths of hell. The Race-course, the Theatre, the Ball-room, proclaim their stand-point in the shuddering records that start to light of Sin, and Agony, and Death. Sinful passions, ruined means, blighted hearts, withered hopes, dishonoured lives, and despairing Death! Only God can reckon, as He surely will, the countless victims that sink unknown or unremembered by the World they have served or loved, sink like lead in those dread waters whose terrible tide flows on with the glitter on its surface, and the Lost within its depths, until every secret thing shall be brought to Light. We may go and return in a sheltered seclusion, from all that could shock or alarm. We may say, 'Behold, I knew it not' (Prov.

xxiv. 12); but if we ally ourselves wilfully to anything that is not of the Father, but is of the World, can we be other than partakers in it? 'And the World passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the Will of God abideth for ever.'

The World that God commands us not to love, is not worthy of our love. It lies in Sin, the Bible says; it has no lasting happiness to offer, no enduring joy; no peace to give; it has no underlying Blessing; it is hollow in its depths, rotten at the core; it can only amuse or please by reflecting its own surface on the surface of our lives; and is this worthy an immortal being? It can offer nothing that endureth to everlasting Life, for it 'passeth away, and the lust thereof!' The pleasure it affords is more passing than the passing World, and often turns to bitterness to those who revel in it most.

The Earth, which is God's footstool, and full of the Glory of the Lord (Isa. lxvi. 1; Ps. xxxiii. 5), is rich for all its ransomed Children even now, before the new Heavens and the New Earth appear, wherein dwelleth Righteousness. The Curse that fell upon the ground for Man's Sin, is turned into a Blessing by Him who wore the Crown of Thorns; the ground is decked with living gems in every flower, and the rich growth of vegetable life. Each science lends its aid to unfold the wonders of God's works; each language holds its own peculiar wealth which one alone could not have offered. The whole Earth is a treasure-house of which knowledge is the

key, opening fresh interest everywhere; while every human soul is capable of an expansive Life that is incalculable. Art reflecting Nature, and Genius with its creative power; all are the gifts of God; and may be hallowed with His Blessing, and each and all reflect His Light. There is nothing true and beautiful that may not be also pure, kindling in Light Divine, and reflecting back upon the soul the Power, and Wisdom, and Love of God.

‘Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights.’ (James, i. 17.) From the flower of the field, and the bird that sings above it, to the Everlasting Hills, and the Stars in their courses; from the kiss of infant lips, to the love stronger than Death; it is the Living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. (1 Tim. vi. 17.) ‘The Blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it’ (Prov. x. 22); from the lowliest Cottage to the Palace Home of Princes. There is no alloy in that Blessing; it maketh rich, and keepeth rich, in all that the ever-deepening heart and expanding mind is able to receive.

The choice lies between the fading lustre of the World, that plays on the fancy, excites the feelings, and often fevers the brain; then passes away for ever, and leaves a void on which memory cannot rest without regret, and hope can find no true material of which to build a blessed future;—the choice lies between this and the pure joy of all things received

from God, and held in Him; a joy that deepens as it flows onward, in its countless rills and streams, to the Ocean of His Love, the Heaven which He has prepared for them that love Him. Shall not our choice be with the blessed People for whom the Great Intercessor prayed, saying, 'They are not of the World, even as I am not of the World! I pray for them; I pray not for the World, but for them which Thou hast given Me, for they are Thine.' (John, xvii.)

CHAPTER XII.

REPENTANCE AND INTERCESSION.

‘HIM HATH GOD EXALTED WITH HIS RIGHT HAND, TO BE A PRINCE AND A SAVIOUR, FOR TO GIVE REPENTANCE TO ISRAEL AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS.’—ACTS, V. 31.

‘MY LITTLE CHILDREN, THESE THINGS WRITE I UNTO YOU THAT YE SIN NOT; AND IF ANY MAN SIN, WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER, JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS; AND HE IS THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS.’—1 JOHN, II. 1, 2.

‘Jesus began to Preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.’ (Matt. iv. 17.) The first thing in receiving a Divine Command is to come truly to the knowledge of what the Command is. By many a Divine Command is only understood to be what the World holds it to be. It is taken second-hand with the World’s interpretation, or with the World’s disregard; not fresh with the warm impulse of Life and Power from the Heart of Him who gives it. The Divine Precepts and Commands are regarded as utterances of the Past, that are to be accommodated to the Present as far as circumstances and change of opinions admit; but such acceptance can never prove the blessed reality of that declaration of the Lord, ‘The words that I

‘speak unto you they are Spirit, and they are Life’ (John, vi. 63.) God the Holy Spirit by whose inspiration the Divine Word was given, speaks that Word to-day, ‘As it is said, To-day if ye will hear His voice!’ (Heb. iv. 7.) Those who take the written Word from the written Page alone, not fresh as a living utterance breathing from God upon the soul, can never know its Power.

‘Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.’ These are not words sounded with the trumpet blast from Mount Sinai, while the mountain quaked, and the awe-struck people were afraid to draw near. They are the first teaching of Him of whom St. John says, ‘The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. (John, i. 17.) These words then must be full of Grace and Truth. Even as when He said, ‘Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.’ (Matt. xi. 28.) ‘Repent!’ What is it but saying in other words, ‘Come unto Me!’ For what is Repentance but the turning of the heart to God? The World has ensnared, or Sin deceived, or Self engrossed, and but for His Sovereign Grace we should return to God no more. But the voice of Love pleads with our hearts wandering each in our own way; it says, ‘Return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words and turn to the Lord; say unto Him, Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously, so will we render the praises of our lips.’ (See Heb. xiii. 15.) And the

voice that recalled the wandering heart replies, 'I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away.' This fourteenth chapter of Hosea gives us a true picture of Repentance. It is the love of God in Christ Jesus recalling the soul, bringing it back with a gush of sorrow to the Heart from which it had wandered; and binding it with that forgiving Love in renewing Grace for ever. 'Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him, from Me is thy fruit found.' The whole chapter reveals God in Christ reconciling the World unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them (2 Cor. v. 19), as we see again in the words of Emmanuel, God with us, recorded in the fifteenth of St. Luke — though Centuries of Time with all their Generations had passed between. 'I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.' (Mal. iii. 6)

Yet there are probably few things, if any, that the mind of man, untaught by the Spirit of God, has a more dreary impression of than Repentance. May not the religious mind sometimes aid in confirming this impression by associating what is dismal to the eye and ear with any time held to be connected with Repentance? But Repentance is not a grace of the soul that can be shut up to times; it is a living fountain that, once unsealed by the Blessed Spirit, flows on for ever; often deepest when holy joy most

overflows ; and best aided by all that quickens the soul into living warmth.

Many a heart not knowing what true Repentance is, supposes it to be a hard step before the way of Life can be entered ; a dark shadow, gloomy and chilling, before the Light of Heaven can brighten on the soul ; a dull and heavy time when only Sin must be remembered, when nothing questionable must be done even though there be 'no great harm in it!' They think Repentance must come some day, they hope it will, but Oh, not now! The World looks so pleasant now! Or the feeling is, Repentance wants time and thought, and I have no leisure now ; or my life is so full of care and trouble now that when I do think of anything else I want a little brightness. All proving that they have not known the Father. (1 John, ii. 13.) 'Ye neither know me nor my Father ; if ye had known me ye should have known my Father also.' (John, viii. 19.)

Ask what Repentance is of the lost Son clasped in the Father's embrace, when he breathed his very soul into the Father's bosom, saying, 'Father, I have sinned!' A sense of want drew him home. 'How many hired servants of my Father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my Father.' He returned in confession. 'And will say unto Him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy Son.'

The depth of his Repentance was when the Father ran, while he was yet a great way off, and fell on his neck and kissed him. The deeper our knowledge and feeling of the love we have sinned against, the deeper the sorrow of heart for that Sin.

When was the moment of deepest Repentance in the hearts of Joseph's Brethren? Not when they said, 'We are verily guilty concerning our Brother!' They were convinced of their Sin then. Not when they found the money in their sacks, and were afraid because they were brought into Joseph's house; not even at the 'I, Joseph!' when they were troubled at his presence, and could not answer him; but when alone with him he fell upon each Brother's neck, and wept, and kissed him; then they knew the Brother they had sinned against; then, when his perfect love had cast out fear, their sorrow and their love flowed forth unhindered by any personal apprehension. That hour of Repentance, of sorrow and of joy, through the years of Earth, and it may be through the ages of Eternity, they must recall with ever fresh awakened feeling.

It was the look of love that Jesus, bound, accused, and smitten, turned and cast on Peter which brought Repentance to his soul. The Disciple was hurrying on with hardening heart and words of cursing, when he met that eye in its fathomless depth of love; it recalled him in a moment, for Sin's separating distance is gone the instant the

Sinner's eye meets the Saviour's! That look of Love that fell on him, even as he was hurrying to Destruction, bringing him back with a broken and a contrite heart, would be the most intense, the deepest, dearest memory of Earth. 'He went out and wept bitterly' (Matt. xxvi. 75); 'And when He thought thereon He wept.' (Mark, xiv. 72.)

Beneath the troubled surface of that bitter weeping lay the calm Heaven of that look, in which the Repentant heart read its assurance of the love of God in Christ for ever; and found its dauntless strength to dare, to suffer, and to die for His Name's sake. (Acts, ii. iii.; 2 Pet. i. 14, 15.)

The woman whose Sins were many, wept not in lonely distance, but at the Master's feet. She washed His feet with her tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Each token of her repentant love was noticed and accepted of the Lord. (Luke, vii. 35-50.) The nearer to Christ the deeper is the soul's repentance. The Sin forgiven and blotted out by God, keeps the soul humbled in remembrance. They who stand brightest in the Light of the Lord, are the most sensitive to every thing in their own heart or life that is not of Christ.

Jesus said, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' All that was dark and obscure in type and figure was now to be done away; all that was intricate and hard in ceremonial teaching was about

to vanish in the Light of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The New and Living way into the Holiest was now to be consecrated, through the veil, that is to say, the Flesh of Christ. Sprinkled with His atoning Blood the Sinner might draw near, and find acceptance in the Beloved Son of the Father; therefore 'Repent!' Whatever may have drawn away the heart from God, let it do so no longer, 'Come, follow me! see the Beauty of Holiness, and the exceeding evil of Sin, in my Life and Death for Thee! Behold the Goodness and Severity of God; His Goodness, in that He so loved the World of Sinners, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting Life; His Severity, in that He spared not His own Son, when the Sin of the World was laid on Him, but gave Him up for us all.' (Rom. viii. 32; John, iii. 16.)

'Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.' (Acts, xx. 21.) It is Faith revealing the Love of God in Christ to our hearts that unseals the spring of Repentance, and its living waters flow. There may be remorse in many a heart for Sin, there may be shame or fear, the Sorrow of the World that worketh Death (2 Cor. vii. 10); there can be no Repentance towards God unless there be Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Love is the very Spring of Godly sorrow, of Repentance not to be repented of. It is because Love is the root or spring of Repentance towards God,—

that Repentance is a blending of sorrow and of joy. The Love of God is borne in upon the heart by the Holy Spirit, 'We love Him because He first loved us.' (1 John, iv. 19.) But though there is a joy in true Repentance that nothing else can bring to the soul, yet the joy and the sorrow do not always rise together. In some the Love of God in Christ breaks in upon the soul and joy rises at once,—joy unspeakable and full of glory,—and not until afterwards and by slow degrees does the sorrow deepen for all the hardness of heart and unbelief. Others first awake to the burden of Sin. Life to God is shown by the sense of separation from Him. The first ray of Divine Light makes the Darkness of Sin visible, and the cry of the soul is to an absent God, until in Christ He is revealed as waiting to be gracious. (Isa. xxx. 18-21.) Sin must sooner or later be known as Sin, 'an evil and bitter thing,' humbling the soul before God for ever. We know not what Darkness is until the shining Light has shown it. We know not what the heart of stone is until it is broken and melted by the Love that welcomes the true and full return, and upbraideth not (James, i. 5); the Love that teaches us to rejoice in our safety by its own joy in saving (Luke, xv. 1-7); the Love that blots out our transgressions, and will not remember our sins. (Isa. xliii. 25.)

It is this Godly sorrow for Sin, this sorrow to God, and this joy in God through our Lord Jesus

Christ by whom we have now received the Atone-ment (Rom. v. 11), that are the hidden springs of holiness in heart and life. This Godly sorrow for Sin leading to a constant watch against it, a quicker sense of its presence, and a turning to God for deliverance from it. 'Every man that hath this Hope in Him purifieth himself even as He is pure.' (1 John, iii. 3.) It is this joy in the Lord that leads the freed spirit on in glad obedience, trust, and love. 'I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy precepts;' 'I will run the way of Thy commandments when Thou shalt enlarge my heart.' (Ps. cxix.) As the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ is the wondrous Clasp that binds the created Universe to God; so this Sorrow and this Joy are the cords of a man and the bands of love, by which the soul is drawn and bound to God in Christ for ever. (Hos. xi. 4.)

Would we receive this Grace of Repentance? it is freely given to us of God. It is not wrought out by any soul for itself. It is the Gift of God in Christ. 'Him hath God exalted with His own Right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give Repentance to Israel and Forgiveness of Sins.' (Acts, v. 31.) The heart that truly turns to God from the World, from its Sins, and its cares, and its pleasures, to listen for the voice of the Lord,—saying, as the knees are bowed in supplication, or the soul engaged with the Record God has given us of His Son, 'Speak, Lord, for Thy Servant heareth!'—will hear Him speak in Power, and will

know His Presence, and every alien feeling will be swallowed up in the gush of Repentance and Faith.

Some who know the reality of Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, long for a deepening of sorrow to God for Sin ; that the sense of His Forgiving and accepting Love in Christ may flow deeper and rise higher within them. Christ says, ' I am the Light.' ' Looking unto Jesus ' is the secret of the increase of every Heavenly Grace. ' The entrance of Thy Words giveth Light.' (Ps. cxix. 130.) Holy Scripture under the teaching of the Holy Spirit searches the heart and life, and brings every secret thing to light. There is one especial way in which we may come to an ever-deepening knowledge of what Sin is. In the Psalms we have the Prophetic utterances of the Man Christ Jesus, when He took upon Himself the ' heavy Burden ' of our transgressions. In those utterances we may trace faintly and dimly from afar, but still we may trace truly, what our sins were to Him, how He viewed them, how He felt them, how He prayed against them, how He was finally delivered from them. If in those infinite utterances, by the Holy Spirit, of Sin laid on Christ, we enter into the heart of our Redeemer, not trying to sink ourselves to that sense of guilt and condemnation, but realising the reality of the utterance in Christ, who was made Sin for us, then we must come truly to know, and deeply to feel, what Sin is, in a way that our feeble

consciousness of it ourselves might fail to teach us ; while every feeling of adoration and love, and the confidence of Faith, must be drawn forth towards our Father in Heaven who laid on His Beloved Son the iniquities of us all ; and towards Him who His own Self bare our sins in His own Body on the Tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto Righteousness ; by whose stripes ye were healed. (1 Pet. ii. 24.)

As the Repentance of the new-born soul flows on and deepens as it flows, until all of self in its Sin and shortcomings is lost in the fulness that is in Christ ; so in Heaven the Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus (1 Tim. ii. 5), carries on His Divine work of INTERCESSION in behalf of His Repentant and believing children. ‘Behold I and the children which God hath given me.’ (Heb. ii. 13.)

The Atonement for Sin was perfected for ever in the Death of the Lord Jesus ; and the Law of God magnified. ‘For by one offering He hath perfected for ever (in Himself their Head) them that are sanctified.’ (Heb. x. 14.) But while His Redeemed Children dwell in a body of Sin and Death, while they are continually liable through their own lack of Faith, or of Watchfulness, or of Prayer, or neglect of the Divine Testimonies, or disregard of the leading of the Spirit of God, to fall back into self, instead of abiding in all things in Christ ; the blessed Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus, is ever

pleading their cause in Heaven. 'I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not.' 'Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him ; seeing He ever liveth to make Intercession for them.' (Heb. vii. 25.) So great, even infinite, is the view God takes of the Intercession of Christ in the Heavens for His Children in the midst of an evil World, that it is said by the Spirit of God that Christ liveth for it ! Oh, to have our low, forgetful, earthly estimates raised into the Divine estimate by the Spirit of Truth ! Then the hearts of God's children would be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding. (Col. ii. 2.)

'Moses truly said unto the Fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your Brethren, like unto me. Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the People.' (Acts, iii. 22, 23.) And He was come ! We see Moses making intercession to God for Israel and prevailing. We see the Divine Intercessor 'in the days of His Flesh ' going up into a mountain to pray, and continuing all night in Prayer to God ; and when it was day He called unto Him His Disciples, and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named Apostles. (Luke, vi. 12, 13.) We see Him revisiting the Wilderness for Prayer. (Luke, v. 16.) We see Him on a mountain apart to pray ; He was

there alone, and the ship that held the Apostles of the Lord was in the midst of the Sea tossed with waves, for the wind was contrary. From the mountain-top, the Intercessor looked upon the struggling Life below, and made the darkest hour of earthly danger the brightest in delivering grace, to light our troubled way, and strengthen our failing Faith for ever. (Matt. xiv. 22-32.) It was as He Prayed that the Heavens opened and the Spirit of the Lord descended upon Him, anointing Him to preach the gospel to the Poor, sending Him to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the Captives of Sin and Satan, sight to the blind, and liberty to them that are bruised with the yoke of unbelief and disobedience. (Luke, iii. 21, 22; iv. 16-19.) It was as the Divine Intercessor prayed that the fashion of His Countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening, and Moses and Elias talked with Him. (Luke, ix. 23-36.) In His Agony the Great Intercessor fell upon His face and Prayed; and as He wrestled with God and prevailed, His sweat was as it were Great drops of Blood falling down to the ground. At the grave of Lazarus the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, has given us His uplifted Prayer. In the Upper Chamber when He instituted the memorial Feast of His Body and Blood, we are brought as it were by that most sacred Ordinance within the veil; the very words for ever rest upon our hearts of Intercession on our behalf. Even on the Cross He interceded still.

‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!’ and the instant answer came to that all-prevailing voice, in the dying malefactor, whose words of derision and mockery (Matt. xxvii. 43, 44) were changed to the one only uttered Testimony Earth in that awful hour bore to its Messiah, while he caught the Spirit and the tones of Prayer from the Intercessor at his side, saying, ‘Lord, remember me when Thou comest unto Thy Kingdom.’ (Luke, xxiii. 39–43.) And still He Intercedes now that He has entered into Heaven itself, to appear in the Presence of God for us. (Heb. ix. 24.) ‘He ever liveth to make Intercession for us!’

The High Priest made an atonement once every year for Israel within the veil in the Holy of Holies; standing there alone he sprinkled the blood of the Offering, in silence, on the Mercy Seat. ‘The Holy Ghost this signifying that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest.’ (Heb. ix. 7, 8.) No voice was heard in Intercession—the blood alone was there. ‘But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, . . . neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His Own Blood, He entered in once unto the Holy Place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us.’ (Heb. ix. 11, 12) There is silence in the Holy of Holies no longer. The voice of the Intercessor pleads and prevails. He who died to make Atonement ever

liveth to make Intercession for them who come unto God by Him.

With the voice of the Great Intercessor there rise, even from the Holiest, the countless voices of the Children whom God hath given Him, offering their Prayers and Intercessions in the Great Intercessor's Name. 'Having therefore, Brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus.' (Heb. x. 19.) The Spirit speaking by the Apostle says, 'I exhort, therefore, that first of all Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.' (1 Tim. ii. 1.) 'Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints, according to the Will of God.' (Rom. viii. 26, 27.) The Holiest is filled with the breathings of Prayer and Praise from all the ends of the Earth. 'And another angel came and stood at the Altar having a golden censer, and there was given him much incense, that he should offer it with the Prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the Prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God out of the Angel's hand.' (Rev. viii. 3, 4.) The Prayers ascend in the cloud of incense—that 'pure incense' (Exod. xxx. 8, 9; xxxvii. 29; xl. 3), the fragrance of His

Name, His Life, His Death, who stands before the Father's face as Man for men, in whom and by whose precious Blood the Sinful enter without spot; in whose perfect Righteousness they stand, and in whose Name they ask and receive that their joy may be full. (John, xiv. 14; xvi. 24.) Well may we look around us as we Pray, and say, 'How Holy is this Place! This is none other than the House of God! no longer the Gate of Heaven, but Heaven itself!'

CHAPTER XIII.

THE JUDGMENT.

'FOR WE MUST ALL APPEAR BEFORE THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST, THAT EVERY ONE MAY RECEIVE THE THINGS DONE IN HIS BODY, ACCORDING TO THAT HE HATH DONE, WHETHER IT BE GOOD OR BAD. KNOWING THEREFORE THE TERROR OF THE LORD, WE PERSUADE MEN ; BUT WE ARE MADE MANIFEST UNTO GOD ; AND I TRUST ALSO ARE MADE MANIFEST IN YOUR CONSCIENCE.'—2 COR. v. 10, 11.

UNCERTAINTY in some form or other is associated with everything seen and temporal ; and we too often allow this uncertainty of things seen to cast a doubt upon, or to leave in the mist of distance, unquestioned and unrealised, the dread certainties of things unseen and eternal. Whereas the uncertainties around us ought to lead us to fix our minds more intently on all that is changeless and sure. It is absolutely certain that while there floats around us a changeful atmosphere of circumstances, which we cannot foresee in the future, nor even trace in their present bearings, we are at the same time bound up with eternal realities, fixed and certain as the Attributes of God.

Of these dread certainties the one that stands

out in the plainest appeal to our conscience is, 'that God shall bring every work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.' (Eccles. xii. 14.)

It is the inference of Reason, as well as the direct revelation of God, that He who is our Maker is also our Law Giver. That as God is Infinite in Holiness, in Wisdom, in Truth, in Justice, and in Love, so must His Law be; it could not be otherwise. That one Divine Attribute cannot hinder the exercise of another Divine Attribute; that infinite Wisdom directs them all in Truth and Equity. 'Justice and Judgment are the Habitation of Thy Throne, Mercy and Truth shall go before Thy Face!' (Ps. lxxxix. 14.) That the Mercy must be directed by the Truth, or it could not commend itself to the Intelligent Universe of God. It must also be the inference of right Reason, that as the Government of God is Universal, so also must the enforcement of His Law be Universal. Holiness could not be required in one order of beings, and Sin allowed in another; if this could be, then Justice would cease to be a reality; Truth would perish from the Universe, and Holiness could no longer be the Attribute of the Almighty.

Therefore, as the Government of God is Universal, and as His Law is fixed and certain, so must its rewards and penalties, whatever they may be, be fixed and certain also. If those rewards and penalties could be changed, or given up, then it would

prove that they could not have been given in infinite Wisdom, which it is impossible to assert, because He who fixed them is infinitely Wise. God is also infinite in Power, therefore what He hath said He is able to perform, and what He hath said He certainly will do ; for if He said and did not, it would show that His Promises and His threatenings were vain. God is Infinite in Knowledge, therefore nothing can take Him by surprise. He sees the Future and the Past as He sees the Present. He is 'the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity.' (Isa. lvii. 15.) Therefore there can be no change of purpose with Him. He is 'the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.' (James, i. 17.) In the magnificent language of Scripture, 'He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast.' (Ps. xxxiii. 9.)

There is in every man an inward sense of this eternal Truth—that God is the Judge. This inward sense is The Conscience, which God has set within the Soul. God, as the Governor of the Universe, and 'the Father of our Spirits,' is constantly bringing man to account at this Bar of Conscience. 'Their Conscience also bearing witness.' (Rom. ii. 11–16.) The Conscience may be perverted, and its true witness destroyed. 'Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and Conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God, but in Works they deny Him.' (Titus, i. 15, 16.) Others resist the reproving voice

of Conscience until it is hardened; 'having their Conscience seared with a hot iron.' (1 Tim. iv. 2.) If the Conscience be guided by the Light of Divine Truth, and heeded in its reproofs and approvals, it will become more sensitive, clearer in its reproofs and approvals. If directed by error, or resisted and silenced, it will at length be perverted to call evil good and good evil, or extinguished in darkness. It is the Lord Himself, He who is the Truth, He who is the Light, who says, 'If therefore the Light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!' (Matt. vi. 23.) A silent Conscience, a dead Conscience bearing no witness, is the most fearful state we can be in on earth; it proves that by giving no heed to its voice, or by denying it the Light of God's Truth, it has become dead or dark; it warns and upbraids us no more; or it has only a voice against sins that are new, and that therefore alarm the faint life that is left it. Death itself may come to a silenced or darkened Conscience, and no voice within arouse the soul any more. It is written, 'There are no bands in their Death, but their strength is firm.' (Ps. lxxiii. 4.) Therefore we should watchfully yield to the faithful Witness of Conscience, because to resist it is to harden it.

Conscience cannot lead us to the Faith that justifies the Sinner before God. It can witness against wrongdoing and approve what is right; but it cannot teach us the Nature of Sin—that Sin is a separating from God; it cannot witness to an Atone-

ment, directing to 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin of the World.' Therefore the most upright Conscience, retaining all its natural integrity, witnessing, and having its Witness obeyed, can only be purged from works that are still dead in the sight of God, by the Blood of Him who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God. (Heb. ix. 14.) By that Blood the Conscience is brought nigh to God, and reflects under the renewing Light and teaching of the Holy Spirit, and the written Word, the Mind and Will of God. And many a Sinner with Sin-defiled Conscience, led by the Spirit to the Fountain open for Sin and Uncleaness, sprinkled by that Blood, has been cleansed from all evil, and has drawn near to God with a true heart, in full assurance of Faith. (Heb. x. 22.)

Conscience is a Witness to every man that there is a Law above his own Will. If there be a Law, there must be a Lawgiver and a Judge. If there be a Judge, there must be a final Judgment. The declaration therefore appeals to reason, that God hath appointed a Day, in the which He will judge the World in Righteousness (Acts, xvii. 31); that account shall be given to Him who is ready to Judge the Quick and the Dead. (1 Pet. iv. 5.)

It is also easy to understand how the mind of man, harassed by the injustice of Earth, amidst oppression and misrepresentation, takes refuge in the final and just Judgment of God. 'A Father of the

Fatherless, and a Judge of the Widows, is God in His Holy Habitation.' (Ps. lxxviii. 5.) 'Lift up Thyself, Thou Judge of the Earth; render a reward to the Proud.' (Ps. xciv. 1, 2.) 'To Judge the Fatherless and the oppressed, that the Man of the Earth may no more oppress.' (Ps. x. 18.) 'O Lord of Hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart.' (Jer. xi. 20.) 'But the Lord shall endure for ever, He hath prepared His Throne for Judgment.' (Ps. ix. 7.) 'He shall Judge Thy People with Righteousness, and Thy Poor with Judgment.' (Ps. lxxii. 2.) Even the Divine Son as Man takes refuge in the same infinite Judgment. 'Surely my Judgment is with the Lord, and my Work with my God.' (Isa. xlix. 4.)

But if this were all the Sinner knew, that 'He cometh, He cometh to Judge the Earth,' what could be left to the Children of Earth but to 'believe and tremble!' It is in this utter need, where nature has no Light to guide, and Conscience no witness more, and reason baffled falls back upon herself, and Faith is not, having no object to call her forth—no object on which to fix her trembling or assured hold, that God speaks, and lays upon the Sinner's heart the Record of His Son. 'God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet Sinners Christ died for us.' (Rom. v. 8.)

The Judge is upon the Throne, the Prisoner before Him, the question put, 'guilty or not guilty?' The witnesses against the Sinner, men and angels; Satan

the accuser, and the voice of his own Conscience—that speaks again, and speaks with Power in the Presence of the Righteous Judge; the Law is there that tries the outward life, and reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart; all unite to prove the Sinner a transgressor. ‘The Soul that sinneth it shall die!’ The Law condemns, the Judge is the Lawgiver and cannot deny Himself. (2 Tim. ii. 13.) Yet hearken, the Judge speaks. Sin and Death are one, they are one by nature, one by the sacred Penalties of the Law that is Holy, Just, and Good, they cannot be parted, yet may the Sinner live! The Righteous Judge will give His own Son full of Grace and Truth, to take upon Himself the Sin and Death, and set the Captive free. The Son will freely take the Sinner’s Place, stand in the same relation to God and Man—only with no Sin in Him, that he may take the Sinner’s Sin and die the Sinner’s Death. He will become one with the Sinner, who accepting this love of the Father, believes on Him that justifieth the ungodly. (Rom. iv. 5.) And taking the Sinner’s place to die under the righteous Judgment for Sin, He will give the Sinner a Son’s place in the Father’s House, in the Father’s Heart. So that it shall be said, This my Son was dead, under the sentence of the Law, and is alive again in Him who was delivered for his offences, and rose again for his justification. (Rom. iv. 25; Luke, xv. 24.)

But if when the Judge Himself hath said of the

Sinner condemned by the Righteous Law, 'Deliver him from going down to the Pit, I have found a Ransom' (Job, xxxiii. 24); if the Sinner will not receive, will not accept the Glorious Gracious Substitute; if he will not believe that the Law must take its course, that Sin and Death can never be separated, that standing in a single Sin he stands in Eternal Death; if he will not look on the blessed Substitute in Hope and Love, will not embrace his Redeemer with appropriating Faith, as all his Salvation and all his Desire. What then? The Judge Himself hath said, 'He that believeth on Him (the Only Begotten Son of God) is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the Only Begotten Son of God.' (John, iii. 18.)

Deepest solemnity, and highest glory, is added to the final Judgment in the fact revealed to us in the Scriptures of Truth, that the Judge upon the Throne will be 'The Son of Man.' He who in love to the Sons of Men took upon Him Man's Nature, that He might bear our sins in His own Body on the Tree, that we being dead to Sins should live unto Righteousness, that by His stripes we might be healed (1 Pet. ii. 24); He who came between the sentence of the Law and its execution, and made His soul an offering for Sin, and was numbered with the transgressors (Isa. liii. 12), and bowed His Head in Death the just for the unjust to bring us to God (1 Pet. iii. 18); He who offers a Brother's hand, a

Human heart, touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. iv. 15); who bids us Look that we may live (Isa. xlv. 22); Come, that He may give us Rest (Matt. xi. 28, 29); Ask, that we may receive, that our joy may be full (John, xvi. 24); He who pledges the immutable Truth of God that whosoever believeth in Him, though he were dead, yet shall He live; and that he that liveth and believeth in Him shall never die (John, xi. 25, 26); He is the JUDGE! For God 'hath appointed a Day, in the which He will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the Dead.' (Acts, xvii. 31.) He Himself hath told us, 'The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.' (John, v. 22.)

Who can know the Sinner like the Saviour who has washed him in His own Blood? (Rev. i. 5.) Who like the Son can know them whom God has Sealed with the Spirit of His Son, and given them the Earnest and the Witness of the Spirit in their heart and life? (2 Cor. i. 22; Rom. viii. 9, 17.) Who like Christ Jesus can know them whom He Himself has clothed with the Garments of Salvation, and covered with the Robe of His Righteousness (Isa. lxi. 10); who abide in Him, and His words abide in them (John, xv.); who have asked and received in His Name (John, xiv. 13, 14); whose desire it has been, whatsoever they did, in word or in deed, to do

all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by Him. 'He knoweth them that trust in Him.' (Nahum, i. 7.) 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal—the Lord knoweth them that are His. And let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity.' (2 Tim. ii. 19.) That holy Name has no permitted place upon the lips of any who can wilfully allow themselves to linger in that which is against the Will of God. The Judge upon the Throne has but to say, 'I know you not!' and the Lost must turn away from Mercy's door, which, not the Judge, for 'He died for Sin once,' but their own unbelief has shut against them; must turn away where Christ is not, and to be without Christ is to be without God, and without Hope. (Eph. ii. 12.) What then remains, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries (Heb. x. 27), to those who have added to every Sin this deepest crime of indifference to the Love of Him and unbelief of His Words, 'Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar People, zealous of Good Works!' (Titus, ii. 14.)

This final Judgment is to be a Judgment according to Works. 'And I saw a Great White Throne, and Him that sat on it, from Whose face the Earth and the Heaven fled away; and there was no place found for them. And I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before God; and the Books were opened, and

another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the Dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books, according to their Works. And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it; and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their Works. And Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the Second Death. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire.' (Rev. xx. 11-15.)

But is it not written, Ye are saved through Faith, not of works, lest any man should boast? (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) Yes, truly, not of Works, in or of themselves, they could only be what God calls 'Dead Works;' but Works as they spring from Faith, from a Soul united to God in Christ by Faith. Faith has its root in Christ, and all that springs from this Divine root Christ Jesus, is accepted of God. Faith hid in Christ may be compared to the Acorn unseen where the foot may tread; but it strikes its root downward and bears fruit upward, and the mighty Tree, with stem and branches, and every twig and fibre, and countless leaves, and unnumbered fruit, all spring from that small Acorn that was hid from sight by the blades of tender grass or a sprinkling of shallow earth. Without that Acorn the Tree had not been there; so Faith strikes its root in Christ unseen, and then springs upwards and bears the first manifestation of life,

and grows exceedingly, until it bringeth forth much fruit. As the Acorn is judged by the Tree it produces, so Faith is judged by the Works it yields; and as the Acorn that strikes not its root downward perishes, bringing forth no Tree, so Faith that is not rooted in Christ can bring forth no living fruit to God, and without Works proves itself dead.

When the Lord was asked, 'What shall we do that we might work the Works of God?' He answered, 'This is the Work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent' (John, vi. 28, 29); calling Faith itself a Work, because it unites the Soul to Him whose Work is Perfect (Deut. xxxii. 4.); because it is the spring of all Works acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, 'for whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin.' (Rom. xiv. 23.)

If this final Judgment be the last Act of Redemption's Mighty Work as yet revealed to us—if before that Awful Day those who sleep in Christ have been raised from the dead, and those who are alive and remain, changed as in a moment, and caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air—how can they be called to Judgment, when they are for ever with the Lord? (1 Thess. iv. 13, 18.) The final Judgment may not then first decide the eternal state of all who are called to appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ. The Dead shall rise in their bodies, and long before they must have known their sure and certain state; but in Rom. ii. we

are told that Day shall be 'a REVELATION of the Righteous Judgment of God.' 'That Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest.' (Ps. li. 4.) Now we bow to the Awful Sovereignty of God; then we shall trace His Works of Mercy and of Judgment, and know that both are 'according to Truth.' It was the Word of the Lord Himself, 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter;' and it applies to His Acts of Judgment, as of Grace. (John, xiii. 7.)

'For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' (2 Cor. v. 10.) We read of the 'many stripes,' and the 'few stripes' from the Words of the Judge Himself, 'For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him will they ask the more.' (Luke, xii. 47, 48.) 'Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to Judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.' (1 Tim. v. 24, 25.)

We read in 1 Cor. iii. 11, of those who build on Christ the Living Stone, the sure Foundation Stone, that every one who builds upon Christ the Living Stone will be saved; but that which some have built, the labour of their life, will be burned up, not standing the test of His Presence who is a con-

suming fire (Heb. xii. 29); though saved themselves as resting on Christ, it will be as by fire; and they must suffer loss. No question is introduced of a man living up to his opinions or to that which he holds as his Faith; he must build on Christ; and he must take heed how he builds on Him, because there is one test, and only one, by which his whole inner and outward life must abide or perish, and that test the fire of God! That which is not of Christ, that which is not in Christ, cannot resist that fire.

It is also written, 'One Star differeth from another Star in Glory.' (1 Cor. xv. 41.) And 'many of them that sleep in the dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to shame and Everlasting Contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.' (Dan. xii. 2, 3.)

From these declarations of Holy Scripture we surely gather that every act and word, every thought and feeling that builds up our daily life, must be tested by the searching fire of God's Presence; and only that on which the fire cannot fasten, because it is 'perfect in Christ Jesus,' can abide that test. How real and penetrating, how ceaseless and how high is this motive set before us! It is all summed up in those Comprehensive words, 'To me to live is Christ!' And the same Apostle writing to the Colossians (i. 27-29) says, 'Christ in

you the Hope of Glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all Wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working which worketh in me mightily.' The first chapter of the second Epistle of St. Peter exhorts those who have received this 'Precious Faith,' to all the fruits of Righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the Glory and Praise of God. (Phil. i. 11.) 'For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' (2 Pet. i. 11.)

CHAPTER XIV.

HEAVEN.

‘OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE THY NAME, THY KINGDOM COME. THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.’—MATT. VI. 9, 10; LUKE, XI. 1-13.

THESE sacred words of the Divine Prayer taught by our Lord to His Disciples, and repeated again in answer to their entreaty, ‘Lord, teach us to Pray!’ unfold to us the relationship, the spirit, and the state of the Glorified in Heaven. The relationship of those who are found in Christ (Phil. iii. 9), is for ever that of children with their Father, ‘the glorious liberty of the children of God;’ perfected union and communion. As the Father is Infinite, Eternal, Unchangeable, so must be the inheritance of those who are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. (Rom. viii. 17.) The Wellspring of their everlasting Life in God must deepen for ever, as it rises higher in their enjoyment and apprehension of Him. Their joy in the Lord must for ever brighten, illumined with intenser Light, as they grow in the knowledge and love of God. While the power to serve and glorify Him becomes irresistible, as His

Will is perfectly known, delighted in, and obeyed ; as the soul in God alone lives, and moves, and has its being, — no alien thought, — every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. x. 5) ; no treacherous feeling, no misgiving — made perfect in Love (1 John, iv. 18) ; no averted gaze — ‘ the eye single and the whole body full of Light.’ (Matt. vi. 22.) ‘ Till we all come, in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.’ (Eph. iv. 13.) ‘ Changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.’ (2 Cor. iii. 18.) Then man, who was made in the Image of God (Gen. i. 27), is restored to that glorious Likeness ; no more to reflect the Divine Mind and Will in the clear, though shallow stream of created innocence, but to be ‘ partakers of the Divine Nature’ (2 Pet. i. 4) ; ‘ Partakers of Christ’ (Heb. iii. 14) ; ‘ Partakers of the Holy Ghost’ (Heb. vi. 4) ; ‘ Partakers of the Divine Holiness ;’ (Heb. xii. 10.) Having put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. xiii. 14) ; Having put on the New Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness (Eph. iv. 23) ; ‘ Which is renewed in knowledge, after the Image of Him that created Him.’ (Col. iii. 10.)

According to the riches of the Father so are the riches of the children. Therefore the Apostle prays that the eyes of your understanding may be en-

lightened, not only that you may know the Hope of your Calling,—‘Partakers of the Heavenly Calling’ (Heb. iii. 1),—but also that you may know the riches of the glory of the Inheritance of God in the Saints (Eph. i. 17, 18); when each one has the mind of Christ (Phil. ii. 5); when each one is changed into the likeness of His glorious Body (Phil. iii. 21); filled with all the fulness of God. (Eph. iii. 19.) Then will the blessed reality be for ever unfolding which is expressed in the twofold declaration (Deut. xxxii. 9), ‘The Lord’s Portion is His People; Jacob is the Lot of His Inheritance!’—and the sublime and not less wondrous reply of man’s appropriating Faith, the utterance of which is breathed by the Spirit of God in the soul, ‘The Lord is the Portion of mine Inheritance and of my Cup. Thou maintainest my Lot. The Lines are fallen unto me in pleasant Places, yea, I have a goodly Heritage.’ (Ps. xvi. 5, 6.) ‘Behold, what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! therefore the World knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.’ (1 John, iii. 1–3.)

‘Hallowed be Thy Name.’ The Hallowing of God’s Name is the very breathing of Heaven; the atmosphere that for ever surrounds ‘the Children of God, being the Children of the Resurrection.’ (Luke, xx. 36.) This Name, ‘Our Father!’ bespeaks the closest relationship, the most entire affinity and dependence. Therefore must it be hal-

lowed by all the affections of the heart, and all the intelligence of the mind. It is Jesus Christ who brings us these glad tidings of great joy. 'My Father, and your Father ! My God, and your God !' (John, xx. 17.) He inscribes upon our hearts in Resurrection Life the Name of FATHER ; as it were to underlie the glorious Godhead, that resting in all the tenderness of the Fatherhood, we may rise to the Glory of the Godhead. It is Jesus Christ who lays it on our very lips in Prayer, teaching His Disciples, 'After this manner, therefore, pray ye, Our Father, which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name.' (Matt. vi. 9 ; Luke, xi. 2.) None but Jesus Himself could have brought this Name from God in His Holiness, to the sinful Children of Men. The Father says of Him, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' (Matt. iii. 17.) Jesus replies to the Father, 'Behold, I, and the Children which God hath given me.' (Heb. ii. 13.) He will not be seen or known apart from those whose cause He undertakes ; and who trust themselves to Him as 'able to save.' The Father acknowledges the perfect oneness in His sight of Jesus Christ and His believing People, saying by the Spirit, 'Ye are all the Children of God, by Faith in Christ Jesus.' (Gal. iii. 26.)

Therefore the Son takes the very Name by which, in His glorious Godhead, He is united to the First Person of the Ever-blessed Trinity, and writes it on the hearts, and lays it on the lips of the

Children of Earth. He writes it on their hearts and lays it on their lips as the breathing of their new-born Life in Himself; as the earnest, and pledge, and claim of their inseparable union with Himself; their oneness with the Eternal Son, in the Eternal Father, by the Eternal Spirit. 'Because ye are sons (in Christ Jesus), God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, ABBA, FATHER! Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a Son; and if a Son, then an heir of God through Christ.' (Gal. iv. 4-7.)

'Thou shalt call His Name JESUS; for He shall save His People from their sins.' (Matt. i. 21.) The Eternal Son came as JESUS, the SAVIOUR, that He might bring home, and bind for ever on our hearts, the Name in which from Eternity to Eternity He Himself rejoices,—the Name of FATHER. (Prov. viii. 22-31.) We may say of this Name, JESUS, that it is the 'one Pearl of Great Price;' for it is in this Name sinful man is reunited to God, no longer by his own frail hold, but fast held for ever by the Manhood of JESUS, taken into the Eternal Godhead. It is as one Pearl of Great Price,—how Great, Eternity can never unfold, for its Greatness is beyond all Price; a single Pearl, one Name in which the Glory of Infinite Atonement lies; one Pearl of stainless purity formed by the Power of God, that even the fire of God's eternal wrath against Sin could not dissolve; because, though the iniquities of us all were laid on Him, He bore them

away, and passed through that consuming Fire, pure as He entered it, to the Hands of the Father. 'Father, into Thy Hands I commend my Spirit.' (Luke, xxiii. 46.) While the sinless human flesh was raised from the grave and the gate of Death by the glory of the Father (Rom. vi. 4), because it was not possible that, pure and perfect as He was, He should be holden of the bands of Death. (Acts, ii. 24.)

We cannot hallow that wondrous Name, 'Our Father,' except we receive it in JESUS. Would not all our ceaseless efforts come infinitely short of the glory due unto the Father? The Father is given to us by the Son, even as the Son is given to us by the Father. There is none other Name given under Heaven (Acts, iv. 12) that can renew the broken tie to God, or lead a created being to rest and live in the Fatherhood of the Godhead. Why is it that many who willingly say, 'OUR FATHER,' yet appear to shrink from any mention of JESUS? Is it because His Name JESUS brings Sin to remembrance? But is it not as the Saviour from Sin that His Name is called JESUS? Where that Name is received in all its saving Power, Sin is put away; blotted out; remembered no more by God, who presents Himself to us as our Father in JESUS. It is Satan's lie that would tempt us to turn or shrink from His Name JESUS, and then presume to take as ours that Name of highest claim, 'OUR FATHER!' Jesus said, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.' (John,

xiv. 6.) And He has taught us to make our every Prayer to the Father in His Name: 'Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my Name. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.' (John, xvi. 23, 24.)

The Divine Character is gathered up in the Divine Names by which God has revealed Himself to us; the Divine Nature is opened to us in those Divine Names; therefore, beyond and above all else, 'Hallowed be Thy NAME!' Continually in Holy Scripture we find the supplication that God would hearken and do, that He would pardon and deliver for His Name's sake. That Name is set before the Universe in Jesus. It was 'the Secret of the Lord' before God was manifested in the Flesh; it was then revealed by the Spirit. Therefore it is, and only can be, that 'the Name of the Lord is a Strong Tower; the Righteous runneth into it and is safe.' (Prov. xviii. 10.) 'And they that know Thy Name will put their trust in Thee; for Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee.' (Ps. ix. 10.) 'These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.' (1 John, v. 13.)

'The Children of the Highest' 'accepted in the Beloved Son' (Eph. i. 6), will for ever enshrine in every feeling, utterance, and act, that adorable Name,

OUR FATHER ; ever resting in it, perfected, satisfied ; yet ever advancing, renewed in knowledge after the Image of Him that created them ; that is, of Jesus Christ (John, i. 3). 'That speaking the Truth in Love, we may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.' (Eph. iv. 15.) The new Creature stands from henceforth in the Creator, as the Child of the Everlasting Father ; for ever increasing in all the developments of an endless Life, for ever advancing into the fulness of God.

Those who are redeemed from among Men, the First-fruits to God and to the Lamb ; who stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion, having His Father's Name written in their foreheads, have this Divine relationship for ever, of Children to their Father in Heaven. The Lamb is ever with them, who redeemed them with His precious Blood. (1 Pet. i. 18-20.) Their very Life is a hallowing of the Father's Name. Their place or State is in the Kingdom, in which His Will is done. They are brought into the Grace of that Kingdom now, they will be brought into its Glory then. 'Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.' (Matt. xiii. 43.) That Kingdom is the subject of Prayer to them now. 'Thy Kingdom come !' This is the deepest desire of their soul, knowing what they ask, and why they so earnestly desire it. It will be the subject of their Praise then. 'The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His

Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.' (Rev. xi. 15.) Pilate asked of Jesus, 'Art Thou the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered, 'My Kingdom is not of this World!' Pilate therefore said unto Him, 'Art Thou a King then?' Jesus answered, 'Thou sayest that I am a King!' The World rejects Him who came to bear Witness to the Truth. It says, 'We will not have this Man to reign over us!' It has another ruler: 'The Prince of this World.' It promises itself liberty; it will not be bound by the Obedience of Faith, and the Word of the Lord. And Jesus disowned the World: 'My Kingdom is not of this World.' 'Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own Glory, and in His Father's, and of the Holy Angels.' (Luke, ix. 36.) When He disowned the World, He claimed every one that heareth His voice, for such are of the Truth. (John, xviii. 33, 37.) 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.' (Rev. iii. 20.) He is the Truth, and they who are 'of the Truth,' live to obey and serve Him; the language of their heart and life is, 'My King! and my God!' His Promise to them is, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My Father in His Throne.' (Rev. iii. 21.)

'THY WILL BE DONE.' In Heaven they live and

move and have their being, within the infinite Circle of the Divine Will. Vivified and nerved, prompted and governed by it, Life becomes a divine existence, a glorious harmony in which every separate part is true, and beautiful, and free, as a celestial melody. This is the fulness of the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of God—when Life in its very existence, and in every expression of it, is Holiness unto the Lord; when perfect love has cast out fear; when unbelief disturbs and weakens the soul's renewed energies no more, for we have confidence before Him. Here 'the Light shineth in Darkness, and the Darkness comprehendeth it not.' (John, i. 5.) There, there shall be no darkness at all (1 John, i. 5), for 'the Children of Light and the Children of the Day' (1 Thess. v. 5) shall dwell with the 'Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own Will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of First-fruits of His Creatures.' (Jam. i. 17, 18.) 'And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither Light of the Sun, for the Lord God giveth them Light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.' (Rev. xxii. 5.)

God has given us pictures of the Heavenly state, to lead us on from things seen and temporal to things unseen and Eternal. When the Last recorded Judgment is passed, Time over and gone, with the Sin that entered and darkened it; when Eternity encompasses the Soul for ever, we have then a New Heavens and a New Earth; all that was

prefigured in Eden is given in blessed and infinite reality. The river flows; but it is the River of the Water of Life, clear as crystal, pure as God is pure, 'proceeding out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb.' (Rev. xxii. 1.) 'They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy House; and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy Pleasures; for with Thee is the Fountain of Life.' (Ps. xxxvi. 8, 9.) The Tree of Life no longer stands in its single manifestation in the midst of the Garden; but in Threefold Perfection, spreads its healing shelter, and yields perpetually its Life-preserving fruit, wherever the River flows, on either side of its Living tide, and in the midst of the Shining Street, that all may sit down under its shadow with great delight, and find its Fruit sweet to their taste. (Song of Sol. ii. 3.)

We have in the Revelation all that is loveliest and most reflective of Light, and all that is most expressive of Purity as describing 'the Tabernacle of God with Man.' (Rev. xxi.) But far beyond created glory, the dazzling light of stones most precious, the Gates of Pearl, the pavement of transparent gold like unto clear glass, the crystal sea, the white raiment, the very Harps of God, far beyond all these the Holy Spirit leads the eye that Faith illumines to see His Face—the Face of God in Christ, and to reflect His Image. 'We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.' (1 John, iii. 2.) 'They shall see His Face, and His Name

shall be in their foreheads.' God in Christ! On Him the soul is fixed, and would not lose that infinite, that blissful contemplation, for any other.

'There shall be no more Curse.' He who bowed His Thorn-Crowned Head in Death for us, bearing our Curse, now sits upon the Throne of Glory; the Throne of Everlasting Life; 'the Throne of God and the Lamb.' 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their faces; and there shall be no more Death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.' 'Behold, I make all things new!' (Rev. xxi. 4, 5.) A New Creation for the New Creature in Christ. (Rev. xxi. 4, 5. 2 Cor. v. 17. Isa. xxxv. 10; li. 11.)

Then the Desire of the Divine Redeemer's heart, the Prayer of the Great Intercessor, will be fulfilled for ever: 'The Glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One.' (John, xvii.) The Glory that fulfils this perfect Oneness, is not the Glory of 'Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, and Powers' (Col. i. 16), though these be also theirs; it is the Glory of the 'Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.' (John, i. 14.) If even here, amidst the imperfections and the misapprehensions of Earth, the ties of kindred and of friendship can be so sweet; 'Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend' (Prov. xxvii. 17); if even here, love can be 'strong as death' (Song of Sol. viii. 6); and

the affections of Earth be given as types and earnest of the Love of Heaven, what must it be in its perfection, when all shall see eye to eye (Isa. lii. 8); when we shall know even as we are known! (1 Cor. xiii. 12.) What must the associations, the fellowships, the converse, the communion of Heaven be, when it is one in God, perfect as the Love of the Eternal Father to the Eternal Son! 'I have declared unto them THY NAME, and will declare it, that the Love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.' (John, xvii. 26.)

'The Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and lead them unto Living Fountains of Waters.' Even here the soul learns to say, 'All my springs are in Thee.' (Ps. lxxxvii. 7.) There the Lamb leads ever on into the infinite Inheritance, 'all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge;' 'the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the Love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.' There is no mere acquirement there; Knowledge is ever a Living Fountain. There is no effort of duty there, all is Love's gushing spring, which carries the whole being with it in its unerring impulse. There is no temptation there to take the thing not given of God, for 'things to come, all are theirs, and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.)

'These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.' (Rev. xiv. 4.) What the wondrous Work of Heaven may be, the tender ministry,

or glorious enterprise, lies hidden in the Ages of Ages, in the Glory that shall be revealed. (Rom. viii. 18; 1 Pet. v. 1.) One with God in Christ, whose Infinite Being rejoices in perfect action, (Prov. viii.) there must be glorious and gracious participation for those who are to follow Him whithersoever He goeth. Life is manifested by its activities, and awakens joy by them. In God's work of Creation 'the Morning Stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy.' (Job, xxxviii. 7.) It has pleased God to pour forth of His Infinite Fulness every form of created energy and beauty; multiplying life and joy for ever. This gracious and glorious action ceases not, for Jesus said, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work' (John, v. 17); 'I am come that they might have Life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' (John, x. 10.)

If even now, struggling with conflicting principles within ourselves, amidst a scene of action where Knowledge is obscured, and Truth perverted, and feeling drawn aside to selfish ends; if amidst all these hindrances God leads us on by Faith in Christ Jesus to be 'as Workers together with Him' (2 Cor. vi. 1; v. 18, 19. 1 John, iv. 17); how much more when the whole man, body, soul, and spirit, is presented 'perfect in Christ Jesus!' (Col. i. 28.) For this every faculty, every talent given, will doubtless have its eternal appropriation. (Matt. xxv. 14-30.)

Foretastes of this Glory, visions and revelations of God, have been given to those who dwell in Him,

in every age, as it pleaseth Him. The eye of Faith is not bound by the limits of Earth, or the shadowy distance of Time. Death itself is oftentimes no darkness to those who have walked in the Light of the Lord. Heaven lies open to the immortal spirit, while the troubled waves of Earth flow coldly round the mortal man. Not only in the body's death, in its life also the Spirit of God may lead on the eye of Faith to behold things unseen of mortal eyes, and the heart may grow familiar with 'Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus.' 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.' (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.)

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